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**9** Arts & Entertainment

**Jack Nicholson admits he's not God**

**11** Family Matters

**A new spin on Hanukka gifts**

**20** Sports

**NFL playoff matchups**

### INDEX

Arts & Entertainment	9
At Home	12
Business	13
Movies, TV, Crossword	19
Opinion	10
Sports	17

## Senior gov't source: PM hiding info from ministers

By JAY BUSHINSKY and MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu is keeping his cabinet members in the dark while creating false impressions about the negotiating process with the Palestinians, a senior government source alleged yesterday.

The source accused Netanyahu of concealing "the picture being drawn for him" by the Americans from his ministers. In other words, he said, Netanyahu allegedly knows exactly which and how much territory the US wants Israel to hand over to the Palestinians, but

**Netanyahu's criticism of security document draws fire, Page 2**

is withholding this information.

Netanyahu's handling of the IDF's second pullback in the West Bank is causing profound dissension among the highest levels of his cabinet, while at the same time creating a potentially irreparable rift between him and his closest political allies, the source added.

This charge was made shortly after the prime minister and most of his cabinet yesterday completed a helicopter tour of the West Bank areas that may be included in the next pullback.

Foreign Minister David Levy did not take the trip. Levy also is unlikely to participate in an over-land tour of the same area scheduled for next week. Nor did Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan, the latter on the grounds that as a former IDF chief of staff he is thoroughly familiar with the terrain in question. Eitan plans to visit Samaria today.

The source assailed Netanyahu for allegedly hiding the fact that pressure is being brought to bear by the US simply because he does not want his ministers to break ranks before the national budget is put to a vote in the Knesset.

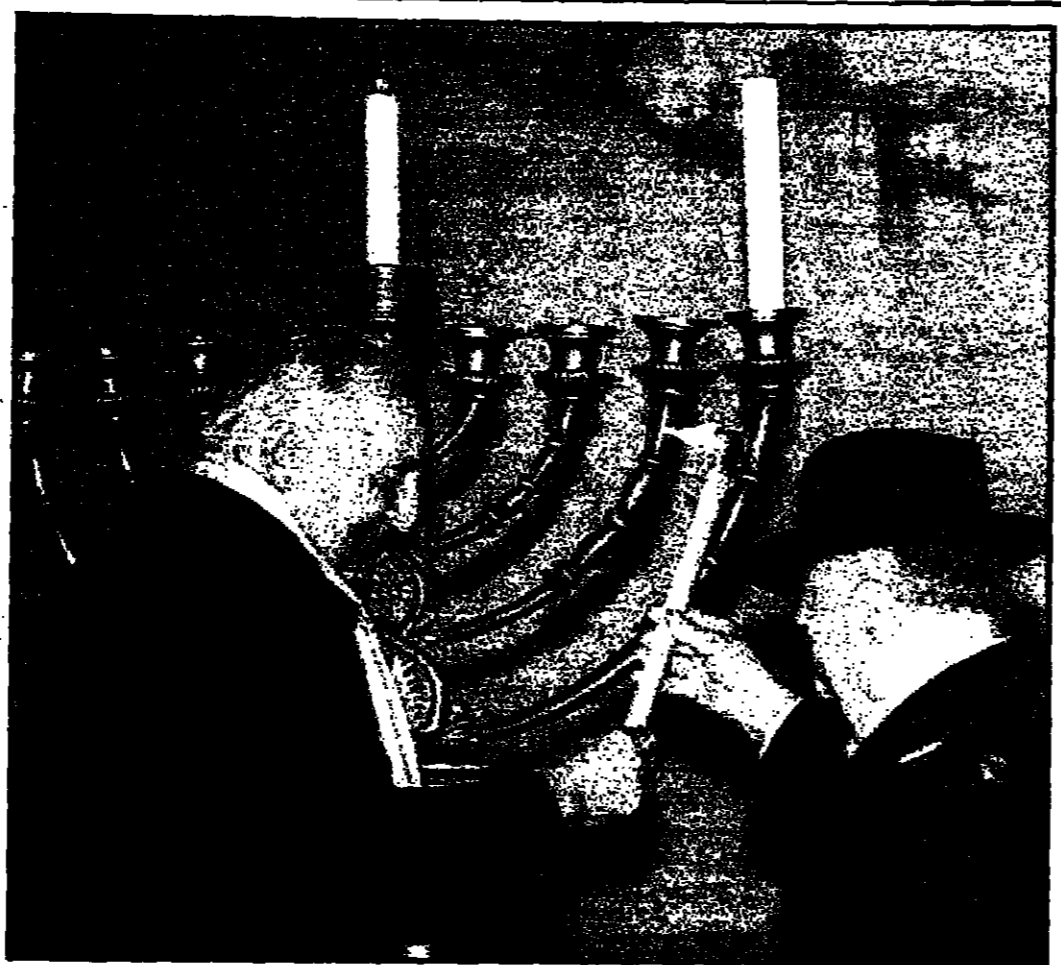
"But he is wrong about that," the source went on. "Because after the budget is approved everything will blow up."

He said the cabinet is composed of hardliners who delude themselves into believing that a withdrawal from only six percent of the West Bank will suffice. He warned that it will be impossible for Netanyahu to put over his concept of IDF redeployment on the basis of a slim cabinet majority because "there are Knesset factions" that could stand in his way.

Netanyahu also was faulted for failing to deal with the memorandum of understanding worked out by Israeli and Palestinian security officials with the active assistance of OC Planning Maj.-Gen. Shlomo Yanai and Central Intelligence Agency representatives. Although the document was initiated by all three parties, Netanyahu refuses to sign the document because it omits the PA's obligation to extradite suspected terrorists and calls for the confiscation of arms from militant Jewish settlers and suicidal extremists affiliated with Hamas and Islamic Jihad, as if they were in the same category.

Rather than seeking to curtail or control the degree of US involvement in the need to assure security for the inhabitants of Israel and the PA, the source welcomed American involvement on the grounds that it was a good thing because it nails down the Hebron Agreement, instead of risking its collapse due to conflicting interpretations.

See RIDING, Page 2



### Victory of light

Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro (left) lights with Italian Chief Rabbi Elio Toaff the first Hanukka candle yesterday under the Arch of Titus, built to commemorate Rome's destruction of the Second Temple in 70 AD. Earlier, history was made when the first Hanukka candle-lighting ceremony was held at the Vatican. World leaders attended similar ceremonies in more than 30 countries to mark the opening of Israel's 50th anniversary celebrations. They included US President Bill Clinton, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and German President Roman Herzog. Story, Page 3. (AP)

## New US envoy:

# Iran was behind Luxor massacre

By AVINOHAM BAR-YOSEF, JAY BUSHINSKY and HILLEL KUTTNER

The Iranian Embassy in Damascus was involved in the massacre of more than 50 Western tourists by Islamic terrorists in Luxor, Egypt, last month, the new US ambassador to Israel, Edward Walker, told Foreign Minister David Levy yesterday, senior diplomatic sources in Jerusalem said.

The Luxor massacre, in which gunmen disguised as policemen stormed one of Egypt's renowned Pharaonic temples, was that country's worst attack by militants seeking to install Islamic rule.

Diplomatic sources in Cairo confirmed the report, and added that Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's decision this month to shun the pan-Islamic summit in Teheran stemmed from his government's belief that Iran is involved in perpetrating Islamic terrorism in Egypt.

Concerning Syria, Walker said that while Washington believes Damascus is seeking openings to



New US Ambassador to Israel Edward Walker (left) and Foreign Minister David Levy in Jerusalem yesterday. (Brian Heidler)

the West, the US finds its cozy relations with Teheran unconstructive.

Walker, who is to present his credentials to President Ezer Weizman today, brings three decades of experience in Middle-Eastern diplomacy to his new post. He is fluent in Hebrew and Arabic.

See LUXOR, Page 2

## MKs nix planned child-benefit cuts

The Knesset Finance Committee canceled yesterday the Treasury's proposals to cut NIS 500 million from the government's child benefit payments.

Other than this vote of disapproval the Treasury's proposals remained intact, as the finance committee approved the 1998 budget-arrangements bill, following a 48-hour delay.

This allowed the Knesset plenum to begin last night its marathon debate of the details of

Budget Director David Milgrom. Matza will be charged with setting the limits on price increases, according to the proposal.

Matza, who met with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu yesterday to discuss the bill, decried the finance committee's decision to establish a ministerial committee to determine the basket of health services, calling it an "unfortunate and dangerous decision that will cause the health system to decline to levels that we never knew before."

Matza declared that the committee's decision to put an end to the egalitarian and uniform basic basket of services in all the health funds resulted from "pressures from Shas, which the Treasury wanted to appease."

Matza argued that the decision to establish a ministerial committee on health will result in tremendous party pressures on the health funds.

"They will be subjected to political blackmail. Instead of supplying medications and dealing in medicine, we will be busy with political and party appointments," Matza charged.

Milgrom, however, claims the committee's decisions will lead to greater competition between the health funds, which will result in more flexibility and responsibility. Furthermore, all low-paid, elderly people, children and those with chronic illnesses will be entitled to discounts.

### Treasury allocates NIS 9m. for Gabor, Page 4

next year's state budget, in preparation for the December 31 vote.

The bill was approved after Likud's coalition colleagues had spent two days demanding financial aid for a variety of causes in return for supporting the government.

The finance committee made changes in the bill's health chapter, paving the way for the establishment of a ministerial committee that will decide the contents of the basket of health services. The committee will be chaired by Health Minister Yehoshua Matza and is likely to include Labor and Social Affairs Minister Eli Yishai, Foreign Minister David Levy and Transport Minister Yitzhak Levy.

The changes also would allow the health funds to raise charges to the public, according to State

See CUTS, Page 2

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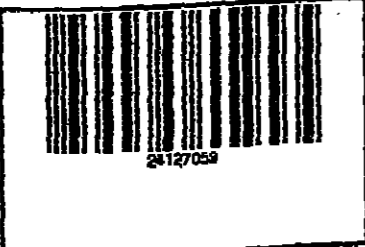
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# NEWS

in brief

## Gaza police reportedly fire on Israeli car

The IDF is investigating claims by settlers that Palestinian policemen fired on an Israeli vehicle driven by Emma Elon, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's ex-adviser on women's affairs and wife of Moleket MK Benny Elon, near the Gush Katif settlement Morag in the Gaza Strip last night. Gush Katif spokesman Shlomo Kostiner said no one was injured. IDF troops, border police, and police searched the area following the incident. *Margot Dudkevitch*

## Iraqi prison off-limits to US arms inspectors

One of the "presidential sites" being kept off-limits to the UN arms inspectors in Iraq is the notorious Radwaniya Prison, southwest of Baghdad, whose 2,000 inmates include Kuwaiti prisoners of war as well as Iraqi nationals interned for political reasons, according to the dissident Iraqi Broadcasting Corporation. It said four Kuwaiti prisoners "died of malnutrition and illness" and are buried within the prison grounds. In a report from the northern city of Arbil, which is within the no-fly zone and beyond the control of President Saddam Hussein, the IBC said Radwaniya "is used only for political prisoners arrested on the orders of the Presidential Office, the General Security Organization or military intelligence." The prison is run by the Special Security Organization which is headed by Qusay, Hussein's second son. *Jay Bushinsky*

## Jeep-stealing soldiers expelled from Golani

Two Golani Brigade soldiers who stole an army jeep last week, drove it recklessly and were involved in an accident in the Beersheba area in which a woman was injured, have been expelled from the brigade. OC Northern Command Maj.-Gen. Amiram Levine, who investigated the incident, deemed it serious, saying the soldiers had committed a criminal act, breached security and demonstrated a lack of discipline. The Military Police is investigating the incident. *David Rudge*

## Jordanian officials criticize Israel

Jordanian Crown Prince Hassan yesterday reportedly told MK Yossi Beilin (Labor): "The Israeli attempt to attribute to Jordan the desire for an Israeli buffer zone between it and the Palestinians badly hits Jordan and we take a serious view of it." Hassan and Beilin had a private meeting in Amman yesterday. Jordanian Prime Minister Abdul Salem Majali told Beilin that the way Israel has not fully complied with the Hebron Agreement, which calls for three further redeployments by mid-1998, is seen by Jordan as a personal affront to King Hussein, who helped mediate it and signed the agreement as a witness. *Liat Collins*

# Three soldiers injured in security zone

By DAVID RUDGE

Three members of the IDF's elite Egoz unit were moderately wounded in an explosion while they were on operational duties in the security zone's northeastern sector early yesterday morning. An officer and two soldiers were treated by an army doctor in the field and later evacuated by helicopter to Haifa's Rambam Hospital. Deputy director of the hospital, Dr. Zvi Ben-Ishai, said one of them was suffering from leg injuries caused by shrapnel and had undergone surgery. His wounds were described as moderate to serious. The officer, a second-lieutenant, was reported to have suffered from stomach wounds, also caused by shrapnel from the explosive device. Ben-Ishai said the second-lieutenant also had undergone an operation and was in moderate condition. The other wounded soldier, a staff-sergeant, was hit by fragments in the shoulder and upper right arm. He also was in moderate condition yesterday after undergoing an operation. Hizbullah claimed responsibility for yesterday's attack, which occurred around 3 a.m. in difficult, rugged terrain between the Rehan

and Soujoud outposts. It appears that the one of the soldiers stepped on a mine, or tripped an explosive device that had been planted in the area, apparently by Hizbullah gunmen. A rescue force was sent to the scene in an armored vehicle. Shortly after it arrived, another device was detonated, not far from the site of the first explosion. The armor on the vehicle protected the troops inside and there were no casualties from the second explosion. Hizbullah gunmen also fired mortars towards the area shortly afterwards, prompting return fire from IDF and South Lebanese Army gunners. There were no casualties in the exchanges. Last week soldiers from the Egoz unit killed at least one Hizbullah gunman in a clash which occurred while they were on operational duties in the same area as yesterday's incident. Security sources said that offensive operations throughout the security zone and especially in the troublesome northeastern sector would continue. The incident yesterday ended a relatively lengthy period during which the IDF did not suffer any casualties in south Lebanon. The region, however, has been far from quiet.

## HIDING

Continued from Page 1  
Reacting to this critique, the Prime Minister's Bureau issued a communique stating: "The extent [of the second redeployment] has not yet been determined and therefore has not been disclosed to the Americans or anyone else." The US special Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross is to return to the region the week after next in order to pursue agreements on the interim-status issues as well as to tackle the next items on the agenda. The State Department announced yesterday that Ross would visit Israel and the PA around January 5. Ross will be "working on the interim-arrangement issues that remain outstanding," deputy spokesman James Foley told reporters. Ross will seek to "reach closure" on some of the issues, and the US believes

"we can have a positive influence as we address the four-part agenda and try to move toward permanent-status negotiations," he said. As cabinet ministers led by Netanyahu and the top echelon of the IDF got a bird's-eye view of Judea and Samaria, settlers claimed they were not surprised that ministers refrained to meet with them. As the government reviews different maps and discusses various percentages, the settlers said they remain confused and concerned. As the ministers landed at the helicopter pad in Alfei Menashe, settlers holding banners greeted the delegation. Members of the recently established Judea and Samaria Action Committee called on Netanyahu to prevent any further withdrawal and not be swayed by US pressure. *Hillel Kuttler contributed to this report.*

On the second anniversary of the passing of our beloved  
**NITZA ETRA-DAGAN**  
A memorial gathering will take place at the Yarkon Cemetery today, Wednesday 24 December at 2.30 p.m.  
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# PM's criticism of security document draws fire

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN, MARGOT DUDKEVITCH, and MOHAMMED NAJIB

A senior defense source yesterday expressed "astonishment" at criticism from the Prime Minister's Office over a memorandum of understanding on security issues with the Palestinians, saying it had not yet been approved by Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai. His statement came after an official in the Prime Minister's Office said on Monday that Benjamin Netanyahu would refuse to sign the document because he considered it flawed and unbalanced. The document, the defense source said, was explained in detail to Netanyahu immediately after a meeting between Israeli, Palestinian and CIA delegations by OC Planning Maj.-Gen. Shlomo Yanai during his flight to Paris earlier this month for a meeting with the US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. At this stage, the source said, the contents of the document were not known to Mordechai, Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak and General Security Services head Ami Ayalon. "The defense establishment has not yet completed the discussion of the document and thus it wasn't about to be signed before the minister of defense approved it," the source said. Palestinian officials, meanwhile, criticized Israel for cancelling a meeting scheduled for Monday night to negotiate a security agreement, charging they would not accept any changes by Israel to the existing document.

Gaza Preventive Security chief Mohammed Dahalan accused Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of attempting to change the meaning of the document by demanding further changes. In another development, sources close to West Bank Preventive Security Chief Jibril Rajoub claimed that Rajoub has boycotted meetings with Israeli, US and Palestinian security officials to discuss the security agreement in protest at the arrest of two Hamas activists by IDF forces last month. Sources close to Rajoub said the two suspects, Ismail Raninat and Gamal Althour are members of the Tsurif Gang who planned the suicide bomb attack in Tel Aviv's Apropo cafe last March, were caught by IDF troops as they were travelling by car to a prison in Nabulus. At the time, Rajoub denied charges by Hamas that he had cooperated with the IDF, allowing the two to be arrested. Ever since, the sources said, Rajoub has refused to take part in the trilateral security meetings. Last night, Rajoub met with Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat at his office in Gaza.

# IDF captures 3 terrorist squads

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN

Israeli security forces recently uncovered three terrorist cells in Judea and Samaria that were responsible for a number of attacks on Israelis, the army said yesterday. Interrogations of cell members has led to the arrest of 36 Palestinians, some members of Hamas and others who are Fatah supporters. The General Security Service, aided by the IDF and Israel Police, cracked a four-member Hamas cell operating out of the village of Zatra, which is near Bethlehem. They told interrogators that they had been operating since the early 1990s and admitted to two shooting attacks on Israeli cars last May. One of the attacks was near the settlement of Kedar and the

## LUXOR

Continued from Page 1

He was special assistant to former US president Jimmy Carter during the Israeli-Egyptian negotiations from 1979 to 1981 and, immediately afterward, held the post of deputy to the assistant secretary of state. His most recent post was that of ambassador to Egypt, where he spent the past three years. "I am delighted to be here again," Walker said. "My plans are to stay here a long time and to work with the government of Israel in bringing about the peace that we all desire." In Washington on Monday afternoon, Walker was sworn in during a brief ceremony at the State Department. Walker told the gathered diplomats and Jewish community officials that he heads to Israel with four basic responsibilities: advancing the process of reaching peace with security; sustaining and enhancing the US-Israel bilateral relationship; supporting Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's economic reform agenda; and building bridges of tolerance and cooperation in the region. Attendees at the ceremony included the Israeli and Egyptian envoys and members of the US's peace process team. A profile of Walker and of his successor in Cairo, Daniel Kurtzer, will appear in Friday's Jerusalem Post.

# PLC members threaten Arafat with vote of no confidence

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH and MOHAMMED NAJIB

Palestinian Legislative Council members are threatening to resign at the end of the month unless Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat ratifies 37 legislative recommendations passed by the council since its establishment in early 1996. Yesterday's session was postponed in protest, with council members expressing anger at Arafat's failure to authorize the council's Basic Law, which defines relations between the legislature, the judiciary and the executive branch. In addition, council members claimed many of the council's relating to corruption within the PA have been totally ignored. They threatened to pass a

no-confidence motion if Arafat fails to respond to their demands. PLC members affiliated with the Fatah movement held a closed session to discuss the crisis. PLC member and Jerusalem Fatah leader Hatem Abdul Khader said members were angry over the Executive Authority's refusal to implement PLC decisions. He charged that the current situation crippled the council's ability to monitor the existing corruption within the PA and prevented the council from setting a budget. "The PA must choose between recognizing the PLC's authority or chaos, as Shakespeare said, 'to be or not to be, that is the question,'" Khader said. During the closed session, he said, Fatah members called for an urgent meeting with Arafat in Gaza

on Saturday to clarify the situation. "We will ask him if the PLC is just a decoration for the Oslo process," he said. If Arafat refuses to address the issue, then PLC members will resign and leave the PA to its own devices, he continued. "If that will be the case then there is no point to the PLC's existence." Khader charged that the situation has led Palestinians to lose faith in the council. "Arafat must decide whether he prefers a dictatorial or totalitarian government," he said. PLC member Dr. Azmi Shuabi who is a member of the committee set up to fight the corruption in the authority, said the PA is rife with corruption and should be disbanded if the council's Fatah members do not succeed in getting Arafat to cooperate. Shuabi charged it was obvious

that Arafat is not interested in honoring decisions made by the council. Marwan Barghouti, a PLC member and head of the Fatah movement in the West Bank, said he hoped the council's steps would solve the crisis between the PLC and the PA. Barghouti said that the PA's failure to implement the council's decisions shows disrespect for the entire Palestinian public, which is represented by the council. Former council member Haidar Abdel-Shafi who resigned three months ago for similar reasons, said he thinks the council members should resign. He said that new elections should be called and include Hamas representatives and opposition party members, adding he did not think such a change would have any effect on the Oslo process.



Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai (left) outlines his security concerns regarding a further redeployment during a press conference at Alfei Menashe yesterday, as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu looks on. (Israel Sun)

# Eitan, Levy skip tour of territories

By SARAH HONG

Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan created a minor stir yesterday when he refused to go on the ministerial redeployment tour because "all the explanations would be delivered by officers who are not objective and who helped make the Oslo fiasco possible." Another absentee was Foreign Minister David Levy. Eitan charged that "the officers who will guide this tour had their minds already made up and then they draw recommendations to suit their opinions or those of their masters. These are the very officers who recommended everything they knew the previous Labor-Meretetz government wanted to hear at the time of Oslo. I don't need to hear those who made the

Oslo disaster possible." Eitan is thought to have aimed his barbs especially at OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan. After his words drew fire from Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai, Eitan, a former chief-of-staff, did not repeat his earlier assertions, but offered a new explanation for not joining the outing: "I know the area in question extremely well. I spent much time there, and fought in those places too. I need no guided tours or explanation." He added that "apparently no one needs to hear my explanations either or draw upon my experience. I had other things to do, where my time would be usefully spent." Eitan has been upset that he was not included in the team

drawing up the security and national interests maps. The team consists of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon, Levy and Mordechai. While Eitan hotly opposes a further pullback, Levy's absence was

motivated by the opposite position. He is seen as accusing the government of not moving fast enough on redeployment. *Arieh O'Sullivan adds: Mordechai defended IDF brass yesterday following Eitan's statements.*

**HANUKKA**  
Misconceptions & A Modern Miracle  
**Ruth Matar** interviews  
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# World lights first Hanukka candle



Lighting the first candle (from left to right): Bulgaria's Prime Minister Ivan Kostov in Sofia's main synagogue; British Prime Minister Tony Blair at his home in Trimdon; New US Ambassador Ed Walker with 'Flintstone' characters and Yossi Mantin, 9, at a Hanukka party for children with cancer at Jerusalem's Laromme Hotel.

By LISA PALMIERI-BILLIG, HILLEL KUTTLER, and news agencies

Leaders of more than 30 countries have begun taking part in Hanukka candle-lighting ceremonies in a show of solidarity to mark Israel's fiftieth anniversary. A landmark in Vatican-Jewish relations was reached last night in the first Hanukka ceremony at the Holy See commemorating Israel's jubilee.

Near a Jerusalem olive tree planted in 1995 in the private Gardens of the Vatican on the first anniversary of the establishment of relations between the Vatican and Israel, two Hanukkas were lit on a table framed by the Vatican and Israeli flags. Israel's Ambassador to the Holy See, Aharon Lopez, lit the first. Cardinal Edward I. Cassidy, President of the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with Jews, lit the second, declaring: "Pope John Paul II asked me to do it in his name."

Jean Louis Tauran, the Vatican's Secretary of State for Relations between States. Tauran wished "the authorities and all the citizens of the State of Israel, as well as all its partners in the peace process" that the Hanukka lights "strengthen our hope for a brighter future."

Two hours later, in the neighboring state of Italy, another ceremony took place at the Arch of Titus, once a symbol of Rome's victory over Jerusalem, attended by Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, Prime Minister Romano Prodi and other government officials. Rome's Chief Rabbi Elio Toaff lit the first candle.

In Washington, when US President Bill Clinton lit the first candle of Hanukka at the White House last night, it was on an Israeli-made hanukkia. Myrim Baram, an 86-year-old resident of Kibbutz Kfar Menachem, sent the hanukkia to Clinton earlier this year in recognition of the president's efforts to bring peace to the Middle East.

Along the way, it was misplaced in the executive mail system but eventually reached Clinton, who, together with his wife Hillary Rodham Clinton, wrote back thanking Baram for the gift. The hanukkia has for the past few weeks been on display in the White House's west wing to represent the Jewish aspect of the holiday season. Just a few days ago, Clinton decided that

Baram's hanukkia would be the one he would light with students from the Adas Israel Congregation day school. Baram made the hanukkia in memory of his son, Gavriel, who was born on the last night of Hanukka 1954 and killed in a tank battle on the first day of the Yom Kippur War.

The hanukkia is made of silver, bronze and copper, with gold and silver plating. Subtly etched into the eight pomegranates are the eight letters of BCLINTON in Hebrew and English. "I think Clinton deserves it," Baram said. "He's a friend of Israel. He's against terror and for peace."

In Australia, Prime Minister John Howard joined leaders of the Australian Jewish community yesterday for a Hanukka candle-lighting ceremony at the Sydney Jewish Museum. German President Roman Herzog also lit the first candle

yesterday as darkness settled in at the site where Munich's main synagogue once stood. The ceremony was attended by Ambassador to Germany, Avi Primor, and Ignatz Bubis, the chairman of Germany's Central Council of Jews. Tony Blair became the first British prime minister to light a Hanukka candle yesterday in a ceremony that took place at his home in Trimdon Colliery, where he is spending Christmas. "The festival of Hanukka and the State of Israel embody the twin miracles of freedom - the one spiritual, the other physical," said Blair, who hosted British-Jewish leaders. "May this Festival of Light bring the light of freedom and peace to the Jewish people, to the State of Israel and to the entire world."

More than 100,000 Jews around the world were expected to celebrate Hanukka simultaneously on the Internet, where the Habad movement yesterday unveiled its Virtual Hanukkah site. The site is located on the World Wide Web at <http://chanukah.chabad.org> and <http://www.chanukah97.com>.

## Weizman kicks off jubilee in Beit Hanassi ceremony

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Ezer Weizman kicked off the 50th anniversary of the State of Israel in a ceremony at Beit Hanassi. Netanyahu, wearing a traditional Jewish prayer shawl, lit the Hanukka candles. Weizman, wearing a military uniform, addressed the gathering. The ceremony was held in the presence of thousands of soldiers and civilians. Netanyahu said, "This is not only the 50th anniversary of the State of Israel, it is also the 50th anniversary of the Jewish people's return to their land. It is a time of reflection and hope for the future of our nation."

## Col. acquitted of negligence in soldier's death

A military tribunal meeting in a special court in Tel Aviv acquitted Col. Motti Horev of charges his negligence caused the death of a soldier under his command in a training accident four years ago. The family of the dead soldier, Sgt. Yossi Shoshan, said the verdict of the court martial was predictable and accused the military justice system of being cowardly and looking after its own. The 18-month-long court martial, which came following persistent civilian court pressure by Shoshan's parents, has been watched by senior officers, many of whom see it as a dangerous precedent of outsiders meddling in internal military affairs. "The entire military justice system is corrupt with the principle of guarding the rank and well-being of commanders and not harming the continued career of a commander accused of causing death by negligence of a soldier. Military justice is not credible," Shoshan's father Avraham said on Army Radio. Shoshan was mortally wounded after a fragmentation grenade went off in his webbing during training. Horev was Shoshan's Givati brigade commander at the time. A military investigation found the February 1994 accident occurred because Shoshan was not aware of safety regulations. Horev and four other officers were charged with negligence for not ensuring regulations were followed. The court-martial could have set a precedent if it had decided that a brigade commander is responsible for enforcing safety regulations. The judges said the death of Shoshan was "brigade failure" because soldiers had not been properly briefed on carrying grenades. But the judges ruled that Horev could not be blamed for the negligence. Horev's acquittal came due to timing. The judges ruled that the soldiers should have been given safety instructions during their training prior to going to Lebanon in the summer of 1993 and Horev, who was later appointed head of the IDF's officer training school, had only taken over the brigade after this period and could there-

## New military settlement in Hebron hills to be dedicated today

A new military settlement, Sansaneh, is being dedicated today, the second in a series of new settlements being erected in the southern Hebron hills as part of a dual effort to populate the area and invigorate the paramilitary Nahal corps. The army settlement, known as a *heahut* in Hebrew, is located meters inside the Green Line, near the Beersheba-Hebron highway. Some 50 Nahal soldiers moved onto the hilltop about two months ago and have been busy setting up barracks, tents and infrastructure. Unlike in other Nahal settlements, the soldiers won't be farming, but performing community service in nearby towns and among the area's Beduin. They will also be performing routine security tasks. Sansaneh joins Yatir, which was erected a few kilometers to the east last July, the first *heahut* to be established since 1985. The resumption of military settlement has been initiated by Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai to boost Zionist values among youth. Nahal soldiers on Sansaneh come from the United Kibbutz Movement and Betar youth groups. Mordechai and top IDF commanders will be attending today's dedication ceremony. The full story on recent changes in the Nahal program will appear in Friday's *Jerusalem Post Magazine*.

## RUSSIAN PRESS REVIEW

**Peace for Madeleine?**  
Speaking about Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's meeting with Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Ian Kfir stresses in *24 Hours*, that there is no significant difference in the positions of Netanyahu and Labor Party chairman Ehud Barak. "Sometimes the leader of the Labor Party demonstrates more toughness than the leader of the Likud. Netanyahu understands that without three billion dollars in American aid, Israel cannot exist. Rivka Rabinovich writes in *Vremya*, "There is an impression that our government, in its attitude toward the peace process, is acting not on behalf of the people of Israel but...for Madeleine Albright, as though she needs peace, not us." Rabinovich says that the Israeli government seems to be more concerned about "what kind of gift Netanyahu will bring Albright in his attaché case" than with the fate of peace and the relations between the two peoples who live here. As the moment of truth approaches, she says, it becomes increasingly clear that the government's pretexts about the security issue have really been attempts to

hide their unwillingness to share the land with the Palestinians. *Novosti Nedeli* presents Yisrael Ba'aliya's position on the redeployment issue, quoting Industry and Trade Minister Natan Sharansky, who said: "The fact that Israel is not in a hurry with the redeployment comes out of a desire to avoid the same mistakes that were made in the past. The decisions we make are not just for a year or for a term. Our actions will affect the fate of the Israeli people for dozens, even hundreds of years." **Lerner mania**  
Passions flare again around the Zvi Ben-Ari (Gregory Lerner) case. "The front doors of Israeli banks still bear signs that read 'No entry to Russians,'" writes Ludmilla Lagush in *24 Hours*. Ben-Ari who is charged with massive bank and bribery, "allegedly tried to penetrate the Israeli financial structures, breaking the rules of the game by offering depositors 15% instead of 2.5-3%. He thought he would be named Man of the Year. He did become such man, but in the pages of the criminal records," says Lagush. Lev Malinsky in *Nasha Strana* writes that "the Lerner affair is falling to pieces." Of the 14 items in his indictment, only three concern crimes committed in Israel, and those three are not too serious, he says. In *Globus*, Roman Svetlanov points out that Lerner, who is accused of bribing politicians, "is not a pioneer in such attempts." He cites several political parties and their leaders who were supported by companies and individual businesspeople. Irwin Moskowitz, he says, "did the same thing but on a much higher level. He paid the expenses for the elections of Netanyahu, [Internal Security Minister Avigdor] Kahalani and [Jerusalem Mayor] Ehud Olmert." Alex Jacobson in *Vesti*, however, criticizes the trend of the Russian media to compare the Lerner case with the Dreyfus affair. Jacobson says the law is law, and "Even if it is a bad law and needs to be changed, it is not right to lead people to the barricades under the rallying slogan 'Our man is in trouble.'" The polemics around the Lerner case remind me not of Dreyfus but

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# NEWS

in brief

## Turkish defense minister visits IAI



Tuncer Kilinc

Turkish Defense Minister Lt.-Gen. Tuncer Kilinc yesterday visited Israel Aircraft Industries in Lod, where he was welcomed by IAI president Moshe Keret. Kilinc and his entourage were briefed on the range of IAI military products and afterwards toured the Lahav plant, in which the first two F-4 aircraft built for the Turkish Air Force are being upgraded and fitted with more modern systems. Lahav will also begin upgrading an additional 16 planes, in a \$650 million contract for upgrading 54 F-4 aircraft. Meanwhile, Turkish and Israeli officials discussed their close military ties at a meeting in Ankara ahead of joint naval maneuvers in the eastern Mediterranean, the Israeli Embassy in Ankara said yesterday. *News agencies*

## Bethlehem off-limits to Israelis over Christmas

The IDF has declared Bethlehem and its environs a closed military zone over Christmas to Israelis, who will be turned back at roadblocks that have been set up around the city. The reason is the planned visit of Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat to the city for Christmas celebrations that begin tonight. *Itim*

## Victims' families refuse to meet Maccabi officials

Representatives of the victims of the Maccabiah bridge disaster said yesterday that they would refuse to meet with Maccabi World Union officials who want to come to Australia "to give their side of the story." "The victims... do not wish to make such persons welcome in Australia, nor do they wish to meet with any of them," a letter sent by Colin Elterman, Adam Zines, Suzanne Small and other victims' relatives said. They also sent a letter to Deputy Education Minister Moshe Peled asking him to establish an independent inquiry to investigate the structure and activities of the Maccabi World Union. *Aryeh Dean Cohen*

## Hirya problems may increase

There are signs that the southern ramparts of the Hirya garbage dump near Ben-Gurion International Airport also are collapsing, this time threatening the Shapirim Stream. During last week's heavy rains, parts of the huge landfill collapsed on the northern ramparts blocking the Ayalon River. Environment Minister Rafael Eitan yesterday toured the site. Eitan ordered that ministry staff immediately check whether work needs to be carried out to divert the Shapirim too. Ministry officials and environmentalists have for a long time been warning that in heavy rains the mountain-like landfill could collapse and the resulting floods from blocked streams could cut off access on some approaches to the airport. *Liat Collins*

## MDA to encourage women to donate blood

Magen David Adom will put a special emphasis in 1998 on encouraging women to donate blood. The effort is being carried out in conjunction with the Israel Women's Network, chaired by Rivka Meller-Olshitzky. Women constitute only about a fifth of all blood donors. This low figure is explained only partially by iron-deficiency anemia, which is quite common in fertile women. In the US and other Western countries, however, almost as many women as men donate blood. The "Women Donate Blood" campaign was launched yesterday at MDA's National Blood Center in Tel Hashomer. Locations of blood donation centers and schedules are available by calling 1-800-400-101. *Judy Siegel*

# Treasury allocates NIS 9m. for Gibor

By DAVID HARRIS and JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

The Knesset Finance Committee yesterday approved an NIS 9 million Treasury loan to textile manufacturer Gibor Sabrina, which was to be closed down. The loan, taken from state reserves, will enable the company to operate for three months, giving over 1,000 workers time to search for new jobs. The conditions of the loan, including the exact sum and the loan period will be decided by Accountant-General Shai Talmon. While members of the committee unanimously approved the loan, Histadrut Chairman Amir Peretz said it does not cover the last days of November, when the company first shut down. Peretz insisted that if the company closes for good in three months, the

National Insurance Institute must fully compensate the employees. Coalition whip Meir Sheerit said the loan saves the country millions of shekels in unemployment benefit payments. However, Avraham Poraz (Shinui) described the solution as "an unnecessary waste of public money. There's no chance factories like these can stay afloat." Explaining the decision to lead the company the money, State Budget Director David Milgrom said "it is very unusual for the government to intervene" but in this case it was appropriate. Opposition MKs challenged this assertion, suggesting the move was only a reaction to the widespread negative media reports and public pressure for the Treasury to act. Meanwhile, in response to the

government's search for companies willing to help fight unemployment by hiring out-of-work residents of Ofakim, the Employment Service yesterday announced a handful of enterprises that have offered to take in new workers: Israel Aircraft Industries is currently interviewing 200 people to fill 50 slots; the Caesar Hotel at the Dead Sea will hire 40 workers; Solog in Beersheba will take in 30; Bezeq will hire an additional 20 switchboard operators in Beersheba and the Israel Electric Corporation (Ashkelon) will absorb 50 unemployed Ofakim residents. The Antiquities Authority also said it would hire 50 people for an archeological dig near Ofakim. It plans to hire 900 people for projects around the country.

# Pikanti to appeal temporary liquidation

## Court rules to close food manufacturer

By GALIT LIPKIS BECK

Pikanti will appeal to the Supreme Court against the appointment of a temporary liquidator, Moshe Badash, the managing director and major shareholder said yesterday, after the Tel Aviv District Court ruled to close the discount food manufacturer. Pikanti, which operates plants in Kiryat Gat and Bnei Brak, employs about 300 workers. In the late 1980s the company employed 1,000 workers. Tel Aviv District Court Judge Varda Alsheikh ruled to appoint attorney Binjamin Kariti as temporary liquidator. The decision was made in response to a suit submitted by Polydan, one of the company's major creditors. According to the suit, Pikanti's accumulated debts to Polydan are NIS 650,000. Badash said he will appeal on the grounds that the ruling was based on inadequate evidence. He refused to reveal Pikanti's total debts to creditors, the largest of which are Elite and Osem.

Alsheikh rejected Pikanti's claim regarding its readiness to repay the debt to Polydan in six installments. "If Pikanti's attorney would have claimed that the debt has been repaid there would be reason to totally reject the petition but the debt has not been repaid and they have only expressed readiness..." said the judge. After the hearing, Pikanti attorney Avihai Vardy claimed the court usually gives financially troubled companies a grace period to repay debts before appointing a liquidator. "Companies capable of repaying only 20% of their debts are given a chance to improve their situation before a liquidator is appointed. Pikanti is ready to repay all of its debts but is not given a chance," he said. A hearing to decide on the appointment of a permanent liquidator has been set for March. Until then, Kariti will be conducting economic evaluations of Pikanti, to decide whether or not the company can be sold as a going concern.

# GSS denies removing anti-PM placards

By LIZ FOLLOWS

Such a way they will seem friendly and fluttering while all at the same time infringing on the freedom of expression and freedom of movement of citizens. The Southern District Police spokesman Shalom Bezeq denied some placards were removed from the field of vision around the prime minister's office because they blocked the field of vision around the prime minister. He said the Prime Minister's Office had not been involved in this decision and had not given the order for it. Pikanti spokeswoman Ronit Eshkol said in response to the charges by Shai and Vardy: "Opposition MKs are threatening the name of the General Security Service in vain. Professional services are not allowed to follow the opposition's slanderous attack. It is not the GSS that has not allowed the placards to remain, but the GSS that has not allowed the placards to remain and not every placard is a threat to the security of the state. The GSS is a professional service and it is not its job to remove placards from the field of vision around the prime minister's office." *Itim*



Preparing for Christmas

Catholic nuns Magdalit (left), Rebeka and Terez, pick up free Christmas trees yesterday at Jerusalem's Jaffa Gate distribution center. The Jewish National Fund, makes the trees available to the Christian community every year, a by-product of the JNF's thinning-out of its forests. *Gee Malcohn*

# Brooklyn rabbi pleads guilty to laundering drug money

By MARILYN HENRY

NEW YORK — A Brooklyn rabbi and his brother pleaded guilty this week to charges that they laundered Colombian drug money through the Bobover Yeshiva and a synagogue. Rabbi Mahir Reiss, 47, of Brooklyn, and his brother Abraham, 48, of Manhattan, admitted to one count of money laundering in federal court in Brooklyn. They face million-dollar fines and jail time. The government contended that they laundered \$3.1 million in drug money. They said the amounts were lower. In June, prosecutors charged that Mahir Reiss and another rabbi, Bernard Grunfeld, 67, were kingpins in the money-laundering ring, in which they earned a 15 percent commission from drug traffickers. Last week, Grunfeld pleaded guilty last week to "structuring," a legal term for banking transactions

that are designed to avoid detection by federal authorities. One other suspect, a relative of the Reiss brothers, is a fugitive. The money-laundering prosecution was the fourth government case against figures in the metropolitan Orthodox community in the last year. A Brooklyn lawyer, David Schick, pleaded guilty in two US federal courts last month to charges of swindling Israeli, American and European investors of more than \$80m. in bogus real estate schemes. Six men from the haredi village of New Square, New York, have been indicted on charges of bilking the US government of millions of dollars from federal and state housing and education programs. And the director of the Council of Jewish Organizations of Borough Park was charged with conspiring to steal more than \$600,000 worth of the council's funds.

# Wiesenthal Center to France: Stop \$10.4b. sale of AGF to Generali

By DAVID HARRIS

The Simon Wiesenthal Center is to begin investigating the measures taken by Italian-based insurer Assicurazioni Generali to compensate families of policyholders killed in the Holocaust, the organization's Director for International Liaison Shimon Samuels told *The Jerusalem Post*. Meanwhile, the Paris-based Samuels wrote yesterday to French Finance and Economy Minister Dominique Strauss-Kahn, asking the government suspend its approval of Generali's \$10.4 billion purchase of Assurances Generales de France SA (AGF) assets. Samuels met last night with MK Michael Kleiner (Gesher) who has been campaigning in recent months to force Generali to pay families that hold documentary evidence of policies that were never paid. Last month, Generali set up a \$12 million fund for ex gratia payments to families and worthy organizations. So far, more than 3,000 people have applied to a hot line set up by the company, according to a source close to the Israeli committee charged with distributing the fund. However,

Generali figures issued this week suggest some 1,000 people have approached the company for information on policies. Kleiner is concerned by several issues, including the firm's alleged failure to open its Trieste archive to external scrutiny and its decision to internally audit the documentation, rather than appoint an outside body. "We urge the French government to suspend its approval of the acquisition of AGF assets by Generali, until that company formally agrees to an acceptable independent external investigation of its Holocaust policy claimants' records," Samuels wrote to the French government. Generali's legal representative here, Amihud Ben-Porat said yesterday that no one, including Kleiner and the Wiesenthal Center, has had the decency to approach the company with regard to this particular issue. Furthermore, the company confirmed yesterday it has so far spent \$500,000 on computerizing the Holocaust claims, and plans to spend at least as much in the future. The issue of Generali's non-pay-

ment on Holocaust-era policies came to the fore over a year ago, when the Italian insurer purchased Migdal Insurance. Since then, Generali insists it has no legal obligation to pay on policies for several reasons, primarily that no proof of death is available, and that when communist regimes took control in Eastern Europe, the company lost all its assets, and thus responsibility rests with those governments. This latter claim has become a matter of international debate, particularly between Italy and the former Czechoslovakia. In the mid-1960s the Czech and Italian governments agreed to a full and final settlement of all open and outstanding bilateral claims and in return a sum of more than \$10 million was transferred to Italy. Last week the Jewish community in Prague received a copy of the agreement, which it claims states that responsibility for such matters as insurance policies lies once again with the Italians. The Wiesenthal Center has agreed to look into this matter, initially by checking the Italian original of the agreement, but also by pressuring Italy to answer questions concerning the entire affair.

## Where to eat in Israel

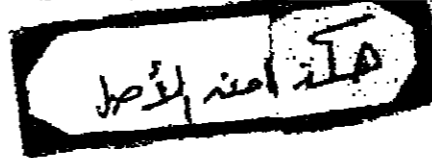
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# Burg, Meridor approved as rotating WZO heads

By ARYEH DEAN COHEN

Avraham Burg and Sallai Meridor used to share a soccer ball. Now they'll share the World Zionist Organization, after the Zionist Congress yesterday approved a rotation agreement according to which Burg continues as WZO and Jewish Agency chairman until January 1, 2000, when his boyhood pal Meridor will take over.

The two grew up together in the capital's Rehavia neighborhood, as Burg recalled, and both men scored a goal for unity by singing each other's praises after the unanimous approval of the deal. The remaining positions on the Zionist Executive will reportedly be announced tomorrow.

Later, Burg and Batya Arad, mother of missing Air Force navigator Ron Arad, lit the first Hanukkah candle during an impressive opening ceremony attended by President Ezer Weizman and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"Sallai, what do you need this for?" Burg quipped, then added he had never thought there was anyone more worthwhile than Meridor to handle the position.

Meridor, who got the nod as Likud candidate despite earlier rumors that former director-general of the Prime Minister's Office Avigdor Lieberman might seek the position, also made a plea for unity in his acceptance speech: "Many times disagreement is better than agreement, but a compromise is always better than a rift within the Jewish people," he said.

Echoing Theodor Herzl, he said:



Howard Schaverien, head of the British Zionist Federation, argues for voting rights for Zionist youth at the Zionist Congress. (Joe Makolam)

"If we want, we can turn our dreams into deeds, and build a people and state here which will be a dream."

Burg, who said he planned to return to politics in time for elections in the year 2000, sounded a similar note when he presented the

Congress with his ideas for a "Covenant of the People," a draft outline of what he sees as the future policy of the Zionist

Movement. He said that "unity does not mean sameness," and called for a unified, pluralistic Israeli society in which "I will be

me, and you will be you, and together we will be us." He outlined a program that calls for, among other things, support for the separation of religion and state; an end to the delegitimization of those who have left Israel; and a program of national service for young people in Jewish communities around the world to work on behalf of the Jewish people.

Prior to the election of Meridor and Burg, the Zionist Congress's opening session served mainly as a Mecca for *mothers*. Delegates shuttled between meeting rooms at the Jerusalem International Convention Center, stopping to slap one another on the back and catch up on the latest organizational developments.

Sitting in the large Teddy Hall, some knitted, some read and some chatted, wearing translation devices on their heads that made them look like visitors from some unknown planet.

A few seemed to hardly look up as the Congress went through its early, ponderous business of reports from a variety of committees. But those who remained in the hall had to take notice when the representatives of the Zionist youth movements angrily demanded voting rights at the Congress, during a special session devoted to their situation.

"Why isn't there a single youth representative serving as a committee chairman or session chairman or co-chairman," asked British Zionist Federation Chairman Howard Schaverien, himself a youth movement graduate. "Give them the respect they

deserve rather than just pay lip service."

Deborah Wolf of New York, from the Masorti movement's youth organization, said "I was raised in a home where Zionism and Israel were fundamental values. I believe that this is the forum for Jews worldwide to voice their opinion and to make an impact and show a unified voice as to what the Jewish communities around the world believe."

She said the young people should be represented because "thousands of students come to Israel every year, and unfortunately the numbers aren't there among the adults...I don't want Israel to be a place that I retire; I want it to be my home; that's an important value. And I don't think our parents and our grandparents have not set that example. And I think it's important that we change this phenomenon and show the world and world Jewry that Israel is a place that's important to us through all stages of our lives, not just in retirement." She may have a point.

Efraim Zuroff of the Third Way delegation said that when they tried to present a proposal for Zionist leaders to set a personal youth movements agenda to immigrate to Israel, "there were many people in the room who said they could not identify with a resolution like that," he said.

For a moment it seemed as though the spirited youngsters would refuse to leave the hall, until a decision was made to try to get Congress officials to consider the matter early enough for it to still make a difference this time around.

## Bill would track genetic information trade

By JUDY SIEGEL

The Knesset Science and Technology Committee yesterday began discussing a bill that would protect individuals' genetic information.

Likud MK Meir Shetreet, who authored the private member's bill, said DNA tests can be misused by employers, insurance companies and commercial interests. People can be refused a job or insurance when found to be at high risk for a certain disease. Shetreet said

Health Ministry director-general Prof. Gabi Barabash had promised to present recommendations on the matter within two months, but five months have passed without the ministry committee dealing with the issue having begun to meet.

"Israel is in a very low place regarding protection of information, compared to the rest of the world, and now is the time to restrict it," he added.

Prof. Nahum Rakover, a deputy attorney general, said genetic research raises basic questions

of privacy, leaving the individual fully naked regarding his personal characteristics. Legal scholars around the world have not yet decided the issue of to whom genetic samples belong.

"Scientific advances should be allowed, but the individual should not be harmed," Rakover said.

Shetreet said that he learned of "international commerce in blood tests for research, totalling millions of shekels, and all without supervision. Action must be taken to promote legislation" governing this matter, he said.

## MKs celebrate Hanukkah with Ofakim youth

With much fanfare — or at least a brass band — the Knesset last night marked the start of Hanukkah with a candle-lighting ceremony. Schoolchildren from Ofakim and Ashdod were invited to participate. The event gave MKs a break from the budget debate and allowed them to sing a different tune: "Maoz Tsur," almost in harmony.

"Remember you are with us and we are with you," Speaker Dan Tichon told the visiting youths. A representative of the teens told Tichon in response: "The youth of today are tomorrow's leaders. And the youth of today have something to say."

### Adoption regulations set

The cost of adopting a child abroad will not be more than \$20,000, and the maximum age for potential adoptive parents will be 48.

These are two regulations issued by the Knesset Law Committee yesterday regarding foreign adoptions through non-profit associations. The amendment to the Adoption Law, which will allow the adoption societies to be established, will come into force on January 1.

The Knesset Law Committee decided it would be sufficient if the age of one of an adopting couple was not more than 48 at the time the adoption request was submitted.

It also put a \$20,000 limit on the cost the associations could demand for their services. This is to include all the expenses involved in the adoption process, such as the assessment by a social worker and psychologist and medical opinion and the journey abroad by a member of the non-profit adoption society.

The associations will have to employ a social worker, psychologist and family doctor, as well as a legal adviser and internal controller, and will have to follow up on the absorption of the child in its new home via a social worker.

### Down Syndrome ceremony

Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon, Transport Minister Yitzhak Levy, Justice Menachem Elon and Deputy Speaker Shevah Weiss took part yesterday in a ceremony establishing a scholarship fund for

Down Syndrome children in memory of former Knesset clerk Shmuel Jacobson, who died earlier this year.

Tichon said the Knesset had admired Jacobson's knowledge and wisdom on parliamentary issues without being aware of his equally important work outside the House on behalf of Down Syndrome sufferers, through the Yated association.

"I am sure the grants will help the recipients reach a reasonable independence and integrate in society and the workplace," said Tichon.

### Bill submitted to respect memorial days

MK Avraham Poraz (Shinui) has submitted a bill which would make public failure to respect Heroes and Martyrs Remembrance Day or Memorial Day for the Fallen of Israel's Wars a criminal offense.

Poraz noted the Criminal Code forbids harming religious sensitivities but does not relate to the sensitivities of the general public for

other important dates such as memorial days.

Asked why there should be no similar bill banning restaurants from opening on Tisha Be'av, Poraz said the idea of his bill was to stop deliberate provocative acts such as flag-burning. Although aimed at those haredim who deliberately show acts of disrespect during the siren, the bill could also be used against other citizens, including Arabs, who purposely create disturbances on these days.

### Direct broadcasting satellite approved

In a rare agreement between the coalition and opposition, the Knesset Finance Committee yesterday approved the direct broadcasting satellite presented by Communications Minister Limor Livnat.

If approved in the vote on the state budget, the process will allow the ministry to begin next year to give licenses for multi-channel TV broadcasts via satellite to homes. This will especially benefit 700 settlements not yet linked to cable television.

Judy Siegel contributed to this report



Deputy Health Minister Shlomo Benizri (r) talks with WIJUS chairwoman Ilanit Sasson-Malkior and South African Union of Jewish Students chairman Avi Kravitz in the Knesset yesterday.

## Panel to promote S. African aliya

By LIAT COLLINS

The Knesset Immigration and Absorption Committee is setting up a sub-committee devoted especially to South African Jews, committee chairwoman Naomi Blumenthal (Likud) said yesterday.

She said the idea of making a special effort to bring South African Jews to live in Israel has broad support both within her committee and out of it, and National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon had promised he would help in any way possible.

At yesterday's committee meeting on the subject, new immigrants, old-timers and potential immigrants described the story of South African Jewry as "a Zionist tragedy."

Avi Kravitz, chairman of the South African Union of Jewish

Students, said most Jewish students there want to leave South Africa, but most of those intending to go to Canada, Australia, England or the US. This year just under 300 immigrants arrived from South Africa, less than half the figure predicted by the Jewish Agency.

"Compared to the figures of Jews leaving to go to other places, it's minimal," Kravitz said.

He said Israel should be more active in promoting aliya from South Africa with programs for youth to visit Israel.

He said the South African Jews

emigrate elsewhere, because they are looking for a similar lifestyle and because of the language factor. "Even the sports that they play in Australia is similar," he said.

Blumenthal said there should be special programs to attract South African Jews. "I can understand, if not condone, Jews who want to stay in the countries in which they were born, grew up and work — maybe that's post-Zionist. But South African Jews are leaving anyway. The fact they are not coming here but are choosing alternatives is a failing on Israel's part," she said.

## Woman convicted of helping murder-rapist

By GALIT LIPKIS BECK and Itim

Sahrav Odeh, who was convicted of helping her husband and brother kill a man who raped her during her childhood, received a three-year suspended sentence and was fined NIS 50,000 by the Tel Aviv District Court yesterday.

Her husband Attaf Odeh, 23, of Habla, will have to serve 17 years in jail for the manslaughter of Mahmud Abu, a jeweller. He shot Abu 14 times for raping his wife when she was a child. The women's brother, Samir Odeh, was sentenced to 12 years for manslaughter in partnership with his brother-in-law.

Sahrav Odeh, 22, of Habla, told her new husband that she had been raped after he discovered that she was not a virgin. She told him that at the age of 12 she was raped several times by Abu.

Attaf Odeh turned to Samir Odeh and the two decided to hurt the jeweller and set fire to his car. The defendants pressured Sahrav Odeh to help them murder Abu.

Approximately one year ago, Sahrav Odeh initiated a meeting with Abu in a field outside Jaljulya in order to have intercourse. The two defendants ambushed Abu, who arrived in his car and the husband shot him 14 times.

Judges Amnon Strassov, Ze'ev Hammer and Shelly Taiman determined that there is no doubt that Sahrav Odeh was involved in the tragedy as a result of the high pressure her husband and brother put on her. If she had not cooperated with them, her husband would have suspected that she willingly had intercourse with Abu and is trying to cover up for him, said the judges.

"The defendant was faced with a very hard and difficult dilemma — every move, in either direction, could have cost her her life or led to her being thrown out of her husband's home and excommunicated from the society she has been part of all her life," the verdict said.

## Special drugs can treat kleptomania

By JUDY SIEGEL

Kleptomaniacs can be treated for their uncontrollable urge to steal by taking selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), medications given for various psychiatric disorders, according to a recent report.

The report on the successful treatment of a 28-year-old man who, since childhood, had been taking things he didn't need, is presented in *Harefuah* by psychiatrists from the Kfar Shaul Mental Health Center in Jerusalem. The authors, R. Durst, G. Katz, K. Jabodinsky-Rubin and H.Y. Knobler, write in the journal of the Israel Medical Association that kleptomaniacs should not be regarded as thieves, but as sick people acting under uncontrollable urges who cannot be held accountable for these actions.

Kleptomania is relatively rare, usually occurring from adolescence through one's 50s, and most often beginning between the age of 20 and 25. They represent fewer than five percent of thieves caught in the act. It is more common among women, and there is some connection between kleptomania and pre-menstrual syndrome, the authors write.

The patient they describe was a kleptomaniac from the age of 11. His father left home when the boy was five years old, and this trauma caused him much damage. He started stealing things like keychains and potted plants, and later graduated to sculptures and watches. Before stealing an object, he felt tension and anxiety, which were released when he succeeded, but the guilt that followed did not prevent him from repeating his acts. He tried several times to commit suicide due to severe depression.

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## Despotism with dash

Anyone who has ever visited Nigeria knows that bribery and corruption are a way of life, every step becomes "a hundred naira dash," as one contractor called it. (A dash is a bribe, naira the currency.)

No one does it better than the ones at the top of the pile, according to the authoritative newsletter Africa Confidential, based in London. It recently estimated that in the four-year rule of the shadowy military dictator Sani Abacha, the president's circle has creamed off \$3.4 billion to cover their personal expenses.

It now appears the military rat-pack has fallen out - Abacha has had his vice-president and 11 close senior officers arrested for plotting a coup.

Abacha himself is rarely seen in public and cares not a fig for public opinion, but the rottenness of his government is all pervasive. Whether a coup was in the offing or not is actually irrelevant - accusations of plots are the Nigerian military's traditional way of eliminating rivals. During his term in power, Abacha has locked up hundreds of opponents. The 70,000-strong army is a powerful force, and Abacha has kept potential rivals there on their toes with unpredictable arrests and demotions.

### No-cheer leader

The real plot is Abacha's planned "return to civilian democracy," always an obvious sham and nothing more than an elaborate scam to engineer his own election as a "civilian." In November, Abacha attempted to drum up some national jollity to celebrate his four years at the helm of the sinking ship that is Nigeria - and to get across the message that he is likely to be around for a long time.

Needless to say, there is not much to celebrate for ordinary Nigerians, whose living standards have been sliding steadily downwards under the glorious rule of the corrupt military.

Four years ago, Nigeria actually did have a democratic election, which was won by the wealthy businessman Moshood Abiola. Instead of finding himself in the presidential residence, Abiola was unceremoniously dumped in jail by Abacha and his coup cronies.

Nobody really believes this alleged champion of democracy can hold elections that are free or fair next year. Not many people are convinced they will take place at all. But even former US president Jimmy Carter has fallen for the Abacha line - in June last year he visited Nigeria and told the world that "President Abacha assured me free and democratic elections to elect civilian leaders for this country will be fulfilled as scheduled."

### Party time

Yes, indeed Abacha had promised elections by the end of last year.

But then he declared he would remain in power for two more years - just to ensure "an orderly transition." Elections for state assemblies were also canceled, and one for state governors has been put off until next August.

Abacha is less tolerant of less pliable foreigners. In October Nigerian security agents crashed a farewell party for US

### Column One



Thomas O'Dwyer

Ambassador Walter Carrington in Lagos. Waving guns and threatening to shoot a person who was making a speech, they forced the guests to leave.

Abacha's police had refused to allow Carrington to pass a blockade they set up at an original venue.

South Africa's Ambassador George Nene was present at the debacle, and said it compared only with the worst days of apartheid, when the white minority harassed blacks in their social contacts. "Even at our worst, it was never this bad," he added.

Abacha's most blatant act of dictatorial defiance was in 1995 when, in the middle of the Commonwealth heads of state summit in New Zealand, he executed Ken Saro-Wiwa. The death of this successful playwright, an activist for his Ogoni della people, stunned the world and earned Nigeria its suspension from the Commonwealth.

Oddly enough, Abacha's Nigeria managed to save some face by becoming unexpectedly involved overseas. The military helped to end Liberia's interminable civil war and prepare for its successful elections in July and then went on to try reinstating the democratically elected president of Sierra Leone, who ousted in a coup.

### Tribal trickery

Abacha said Nigeria, being a rich and powerful country, is duty bound to foster freedom and stability in the region. The policy sat oddly with opposition Democrats at home who found it hard to criticize an overtly positive action by their country in the region, while wishing Abacha would relieve his tyranny at home.

Others just saw it as sheer hypocrisy: "There is no point rushing to Sierra Leone to fight for democracy when there is no democracy in Nigeria," said Chimani Ubani, head of the Nigerian Democratic Alternative. "We urge the military regime to speedily restore democracy here, for charity begins at home," said the *Post Express* newspaper.

With this week's arrests of Abacha's number two, Gen. Oladipou Diya, and his alleged coup plotters, the "transition" as it is called, looks set to fade further.

More worrying is the tribal sub-plot to the arrests. All of those arrested are ethnic Yoruba from the southwest (as is Moshood Abiola), a region most hostile to Abacha. Abacha and his tight inner circle are Hausa from the north.

Now that's all Africa needs - one more tribal conflict.

# Next year in Havana

Anti-Castro sentiment sinks US expatriates' plans to sail to Cuba for pope's visit

By MIKE CLARY

MIAMI — The Archdiocese of Miami had its own Titanic-like experience last week, when a tidal wave of anti-Castro sentiment from the exile community here sank the church's big plans to sail a luxury ship filled with Catholic pilgrims to Cuba for next month's visit of Pope John Paul II.

"It is now evident to me that the cruise ship has become a source of serious tension in our community," Miami Archbishop John Favalora said, explaining why he was canceling the trip.

In place of the *Norwegian Majesty*, chartered at a cost of \$800,000, an archdiocese spokeswoman said the church would try to hire a plane to carry to Havana the pilgrims who had signed up for the cruise.

Favalora's decision came just 24 hours after he met with prominent Latino Catholics - bankers, lawyers and business executives - who expressed concern that Cuban President Fidel Castro would use the visit of an American-based ocean liner to score a symbolic victory in the bitter, 40-year battle between

exiles here and the Communist regime.

The arrival of a luxury liner in Havana would have sent a message of normalcy, when the fact is that there are Cubans dying in the Florida Straits, trying to escape in makeshift rafts," said Rafael Penalver, a lawyer and one of several Cuban-American leaders who met with Favalora and his three auxiliary bishops Thursday.

"What we do not want is for Castro to send a false propaganda message to the world," he said.

Penalver, who is active in both civic and Catholic affairs, said the church's decision to charter the 1,000-passenger vessel was "insensitive to exiles" and was made with insufficient consultation with Cuban-Americans. "We're very pleased that the archbishop has listened and taken our concerns into account," he added.

Because of a 35-year US trade embargo and a prohibition on travel to Cuba from America, the archdiocese plan to sail directly to Havana had to be approved by the US State Department. To avoid spending money in Cuba in violation of the embargo, those

aboard were to eat and sleep on the ship.

In granting approval for the cruise, a State Department spokesman said the "US government views the pope's visit as a potentially important event in bringing to the Cuban people a message of hope and the need for respect of human rights."

But church leaders may have misjudged the willingness of exiles - even though most are devout Catholics and admirers of the pope - to accept any act that could be seen as an endorsement of the legitimacy of the Castro government.

In Miami, home to about one million Cuban-Americans, the church-organized Cuba voyage had been controversial and divisive from the time it was announced in October, even though the church emphasized the trip's spiritual nature.

Although each year thousands of Cuban-Americans obtain special visas to travel to the island to visit relatives, and thousands more enter as tourists on flights from Mexico and the Bahamas, most exiles respect the US embargo on tourism and trade with Cuba.

And most are loath to do anything that would tend to aid the Castro regime.

The travel agency booking passage for "pilgrims" - whose Catholic bona fides had to be attested to by their local parish - received threats. Miami Bishop Agustin Roman, a popular Cuban-born church leader, announced he would not take part. US Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a Cuban-born Republican, urged Miamians to stay home and listen to the pope on the radio.

Earlier this month, thousands opposing the cruise marched through the heart of Little Havana, some carrying signs that read, "Want to see the pope? Go to Rome."

With Spanish-language radio commentators and influential exile groups such as the Cuban-American National Foundation assailing the trip, relatively few Miami Cuban-Americans had signed up for the trip, as of this week, only about 400 people had reserved for the four-day travel, at prices ranging from \$900 to \$1,400.

Most were non-Hispanics from elsewhere in the US. Refunds will be offered, according to a

church spokeswoman.

Church officials said plans to use a ship to carry the faithful to Havana, where the pope is to conduct a January 25 mass during his five-day visit, stemmed from an invitation from the Cuban church, which has been enjoying a rebirth since Castro eased restrictions on worship, including a one-time allowance this year of Christmas.

Many Cuban exiles have expressed hope that the pontiff's first visit to the island will accelerate a transition to democracy there.

The fervor of the anti-Castro sentiment here has become legend, with politicians at all levels - national, state and local - having tasted its sting.

Castro foes have used street protests and threats of economic boycotts.

With their broadcast assaults on Spanish-language stations and with their impassioned writings in Spanish and English publications, hard-liners in the exile community have enforced on artists and performers a rigid view on Cuba and have had considerable sway on US foreign policy.

(LA Times)

## Admitting priestly sexual abuse

By JOE MATHEWS

WESTON, Mass. — St. Julia's Church in this Boston suburb is only half-filled, but this mid-week Mass is so important that the parish priest won't be the one giving it. The local bishop, Emilio Alue, has the honors, and he pauses and swallows and pauses again, searching for words that have not come easily to him or his Roman Catholic Church.

"Victims of sexual abuse have been seriously sinned against," says the bishop. "To any person who has suffered abuse from a minister of the church, we apologize for what has happened and ask for forgiveness."

Such a statement might be expected to be commonplace by now, in a decade that has seen hundreds of cases of sex abuse by priests become public.

But the Catholic Church, by the admission of its own officials here, has been a reluctant confessor.

The apologies offered by the Archdiocese of Boston during special Masses, such as the one in Weston, are unprecedented, according to church leaders and victims' groups.

"What Boston is doing is unique in the country: The Masses are an important step," says David Clohessy, the Missouri-based national director of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAAP).

"The church has done so little for so long that anything has to be viewed as progress." The effort in Boston has come in two parts. This fall, bishops from all five of the archdiocese's regions have sponsored a series of "healing" Masses for victims of sex abuse by priests. "In the past, we have this kind of healing Mass only for victims of war or severe natural disasters," says a Boston bishop, John McCormack.

And last month, the Boston archbishop, Cardinal Bernard Law, issued a public letter that victims and church officials called

extraordinary.

"I know of nothing that has caused greater pain to the church than this phenomenon of abuse," the cardinal wrote. "With all my heart, I beg forgiveness of all who have been hurt by these acts of abuse."

The letter was striking because the archbishop had long expressed skepticism about allegations of sex abuse in the priesthood.

In 1992, when former altar boys filed charges against Massachusetts priest James Porter - and the issue of sex abuse by priests exploded into the public consciousness - Law was defensive.

But the hundreds of allegations since have changed the cardinal's thinking, associates say.

The Rev. Andrew Greeley, a Chicago priest, author and sociologist, has estimated that 2,000 to 4,000 American priests have abused young people, leaving about 100,000 victims.

The sheer number of charges has taken a considerable financial toll. This year, a Texas jury found the Diocese of Dallas guilty of "gross negligence" in its handling of a priest accused of sexual misconduct and awarded a record \$119.6 million to the victim. The church is appealing.

"I don't want to rain on anybody's parade, but there may be more than a little self-interest behind the special Masses in Boston," says A.W. Richard Sipe, a former Catholic priest who has written extensively on church sex abuse. "The church wants to apologize, receive forgiveness and to move on. I wonder if this isn't a public relations ploy."

But Sister Rita McCarthy, a nun and Boston Archdiocese official who counsels victims of abuse by priests, says the Masses are a sincere effort "to ask for God's healing power for the victims, and for the church, which has been greatly harmed by this."

She first suggested holding the healing Masses more than a year ago and slowly

won over the cardinal.

Reaction to the Masses has been mixed. Roderick MacLeish, a Boston lawyer who has represented hundreds of sex abuse victims, has praised the archdiocese.

During the first Mass, held at a suburban church where two former pastors have been accused of abuse, an elderly woman stood up and said: "I have waited 40 years to hear those words, and I am most grateful."

But Jack Regan, the father of a sex abuse victim, calls the Masses "totally scripted" and "pure public relations." Phil Saviano, who was abused as an altar boy and now heads the New England chapter of SNAAP, refuses to attend, saying that he and other victims are "too angry to go near a church." Joe Dulong, who has filed a lawsuit alleging that he was abused two decades ago by a priest in the archdiocese, attended a Mass and left "disappointed that all we got was this half-hearted apology. They never say how they are going to make sure this doesn't happen again."

Saviano and others argue that the church needs to screen applicants more thoroughly. And prosecutors and victims of sex abuse by priests argue that many dioceses contribute to the problem by refusing to require church officials to report abuse to the police.

"The healing Masses are indicative of what's still wrong. They want to handle this with prayer, inside the church," says Saviano. "But when abuse happens, the appropriate response is to call a cop." As a 12-year-old, Saviano was abused by Father David Holley, who molested dozens of children over a 30-year period - with the knowledge of church officials, court records show. Holley, who is serving a 275-year prison term in New Mexico, was given counseling and transferred to another state whenever parishioners complained.

"Clearly, the church was a big part of the problem in some cases," says John Walsh,

a spokesman for the Archdiocese of Boston.

"But as a spiritual institution, our presumption must remain that people who come to us come to us in confidence. You have to remember that the church, and society, are still learning about this issue. Our response is bound to be somewhat awkward."

Some of that awkwardness was on display during the healing Mass in Weston. Even as he apologized to victims, Alue appeared defensive throughout, frequently referring to "the tiny minority" of priests involved in abuse. Alue asked for prayers for "the vast majority of priests dedicated to celibacy, but embarrassed by the behavior of a very small number of our colleagues."

Outside the church, the bishop and approximately 75 people in attendance were confronted by 25 candle-holding protesters, among them John Sacco. Sacco and his five siblings say they were sexually abused by a former pastor at St. Julia's, John Geoghan, who has been accused in civil suits of molesting at least 28 children in Boston-area parishes over the past three decades.

A criminal investigation of Geoghan is under way, according to the Suffolk County district attorney's office.

Alue had wanted to avoid Sacco as he left the church, but a nun who knows both men prevailed upon the bishop to meet the alleged victim.

"Bishop," said Sacco, "the church needs to provide free therapy to victims and report all cases to the police. That's the bottom line." "I understand your point, but we have a procedure," Alue said.

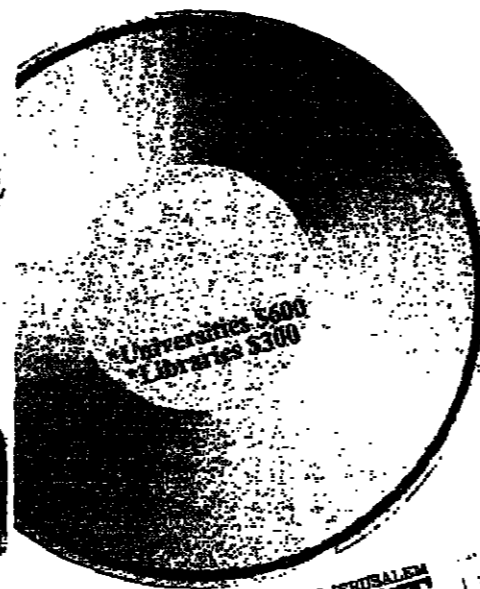
"We're doing everything in our power." Both men, frustrated, shook hands and turned away.

"What else can we do?" the bishop said to himself, while Sacco whispered to a protester: "He doesn't understand yet that the apology is the beginning, not the end, of the conversation." (The Baltimore Sun)

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# President-elect's remark shakes Korean markets

By YOO CHUN-SIK

SEOUL (Reuters) - South Korean markets fell into an abyss yesterday over renewed alarm about a possible debt default in the country and on President-elect Kim Dae-jung's reported remarks on the crisis.

But the president-elect's party said late yesterday that Kim's comments about "national bankruptcy" in South Korea were misunderstood.

"The president-elect did not mean there was a real possibility of a national bankruptcy but wanted to express his willingness to undertake restructuring," Kim Min-seok, senior vice-spokesman for the National Congress for New Politics party, said.

Financial markets were unshaken by Kim Dae-jung's candid comments, quoted in yesterday's edition of the leading *Chosun Ilbo* newspaper. Stocks plunged a record 7.5 percent, while the

won tumbled against the dollar and interest rates soared.

The newspaper quoted Kim Dae-jung as telling party members on Monday: "We don't know whether we would go bankrupt tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. I can't sleep since I was briefed [about the financial situation]. I am totally flabbergasted. This is the bottom. It's a matter of one month, no, even one day. I just can't understand how the situation came to this."

"I can't help being angry," Kim Dae-jung said.

"The government did this to our country," Kim Dae-jung said.

"Our response to the crisis must be accurate and no single mistake must be allowed." Officials at major South Korean banks were critical of Kim Dae-jung's remarks, saying they had caused renewed alarm about the financial crisis facing the country.

Kim Dae-jung, who won the hotly-contested presidential election last

Thursday, reiterated his commitment to implementing reforms mandated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which earlier this month arranged a record bail-out of South Korea's faltering economy totalling \$57 billion.

Kim Dae-jung also said he had made a mistake when he suggested during the campaign he would seek to renegotiate the IMF's conditions for the rescue loans.

He does not take office until February 25, but incumbent President Kim Young-sam has promised him a voice in national affairs until then.

Late yesterday the party's chief policy maker Kim Won-gil said: "The remarks should not have been read as indicating the possibility of national bankruptcy." The central bank of Korea and the Finance Ministry tried to reassure financial markets, especially international investors who are crucial to South Korea's recovery, that the coun-

try was not facing sovereign default.

Assistant central bank governor Lee Kang-nam tried to calm markets.

"Some news reports made the financial markets extremely unstable," Lee said. "But given the current level of usable foreign currency reserves and expected money inflows from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, sovereign defaults will never happen."

Lee said several Japanese banks had agreed on Monday to roll over loans to South Korean commercial banks, although it was unclear for how long the maturities had been extended.

The heads of foreign banks operating in South Korea had an emergency meeting yesterday to decide whether they would roll over loans to the country's financial institutions, struggling with dollar shortages.

But investors whose nerves have been frayed by months of increasingly bad

news were not easily calmed.

The National Congress for New Politics party put out a statement quoting Finance Minister Lim Chang-yeul as saying that while South Korea was now "troubled to repay short-term debts," it would be able to settle the debts.

But the markets focused on Kim Dae-jung's comments.

Stocks closed at 366.36 points, off 7.50% - a record one-day plunge in percentage terms.

The won plunged to an historic low of 1,995.0 to the dollar, before recovering to close at 1,962.0, against Monday's close of 1,715.0 on Monday.

South Korea's currency has lost 57% of its value against the dollar this year.

A slew of ratings downgrades by Moody's Investors Service and Standard & Poor's (S&P) also dealt a blow to markets.

The downgrades lowered South

Korea's foreign currency ratings to junk bond from low investment-grade status.

Interest rates on benchmark three-year corporate bonds with bank guarantees soared to a record 31.45% before falling back to close at 31.11%.

Meanwhile, the militant Korea Confederation of Trade Unions threatened an "all-out struggle" if the government tried to make it easier for companies to lay off workers.

"We cannot accept the move to make workers a scapegoat while delaying reforms in chaebol conglomerates, which as the main culprit for the economic crisis," it said.

The group also criticized Kim Dae-jung for submitting to US pressure and demanded the US "stop walking over South Koreans with an attitude of an occupying force."

Kim Dae-jung said on Monday that layoffs were inevitable if that was the only way companies could survive.

## Britons go Christmas crackers over season's pet presents

By KAREN BLEY

LONDON (Reuters) - Britons are mad about animals but really go crackers at Christmas time as stores come up with wacky and downright daft gifts for that special moggy or mutt.

British Home Stores is selling dress-up kits for dogs and cats, including a dinner suit complete with white bib, cuffs and a black bow tie.

Festive felines may prefer the "Moggy Monarch" outfit - a red velvet cape with white fur trim and a crown for that finishing touch.

"They are going down a storm," said Peter Robinson, a spokesman for the high-street retailer.

Other bizarre pet gifts include clip-on antlers, doggy Christmas cakes and mince pies, as well as wreaths made of bone-shaped dog biscuits.

Petsmart is selling Santa costumes for about £6 (\$10) while upmarket London store

Harrods offers fairy and angel outfits with attached halo and star for £125.

And for animals that want to stay stylish all year long, paw-print design jumpers, polar fleece coats and denim and tartan jackets are proving a huge hit.

But the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals warns owners against dressing up their pets.

"Don't be tempted to dress your pets in fancy dress outfits. They might look like fun but can cause distress or could seriously injure an animal if the material becomes snagged outdoors," the animal charity said in its Christmas tip sheet.

Truly barking mad pet lovers would cast aside doggie duvets and futons for Harrods' four-poster pet bed.

Done in the style of Marie Antoinette with drapes, fitted cushions, woodwork finished in gold leaf and topped with ostrich plumes, the bed is a bargain at £9,999.

Christmas stockings filled with toys and

treats have long been a favorite with cat and dog owners, but the market is now expanding to cater for the smaller pet.

Hamsters may be thrilled to wake up on Christmas morning to find locust beans, a nibble chew and chocolate drops wrapped up in a miniature Santa sack.

Birds need not feel left out of the festivities when they can decorate their cages with a Christmas bell.

Dogs can join in the family fun with the board game "My Dog Can Do That" in which owners select cards and have 30 seconds to get their dog to do the trick.

Other stocking fillers for dogs include squeaky toys shaped like Santa or one of his reindeer, while cats can have fun with fabric Christmas trees or mice decked out in festive costumes.

Harrods is offering a gumball machine that dispenses pet treats for almost £60. Dogs and cats would have to be taught how to pull the handle.

## Pro-Khatami papers praise planned TV address to US

Anthony Quinn invited to local film festival

TEHERAN (Reuters) - Moderate Iranian newspapers on Monday welcomed a ministerial suggestion that President Mohammad Khatami should make a televised address to the American people, but conservative dailies expressed strong reservations.

Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi said last Thursday it would be "natural for a president of a country to speak through the television and the media... To explain the problems and issues that exist between the two peoples."

Media reports have said the address by Khatami could be in the form of a New Year message.

"America's ruling circles have been caught off guard by the well thought move of our dear president, and they see that their lies [about Iran] will be exposed," the pro-Khatami daily *Ettelaat* said.

It also cautioned that Khatami's move could be exploited in the US.

"Under these circumstances we should be vigilant and welcome this worthy initiative by our dear president while further strengthening our unity," it added.

The conservative daily *Resalat* took a much frostier line. It urged Khatami to make clear that Iran only could accept a friendship of equals - and used a saying much favored by the late revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini about the unlikelihood of good ties with Washington.

"The kind of friendship we should promote is not one marked by lack of awareness, like the friendship between the wolf and the sheep," it said.

The headline daily *Jomhuri Eslami* went further, asserting the primacy of supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Khatami's rival in a growing power struggle between moderates and the headline religious establishment that Khomeini brought to

power.

Without naming Khatami, said: "If anyone here has... a message to send, it would be best if it is expressed clearly and strongly so that the enemies of Islam and the revolution will not imagine that something has changed in favor of America or the Zionists."

"In this context, it is naturally the exalted leader who, under the constitution, has the last word on determining the strategy of our government system," it said in a commentary headlined "A mirage on America's mind."

The election of Khatami, who defeated candidates backed by hardliners and the conservative clergy in an election in May, has raised expectations of a thaw in US-Iran relations.

But Khamenei, who is ranked above the president, has rejected any thaw in ties with Washington.

Washington accuses Tehran of sponsoring terrorism, seeking to

build a nuclear arsenal and undermining the US-sponsored Middle East peace process. Iran denies the charges.

Khatami aroused US interest earlier this month when he told a news conference he had great respect for the "great people of the United States" and hoped to have a dialogue with them soon.

US President Bill Clinton responded by saying he hoped a dialogue could be resumed.

Teheran newspapers said on Monday that veteran US actor Anthony Quinn had been invited to attend Iran's Fajr film festival, where 14 of his films would be shown, including a 1977 feature called *The Mission* about the beginnings of Islam.

The festival, held every February along with other events marking the 1979 Islamic revolution, last year featured films by Oliver Stone, but the US director did not attend.



Santa comes to Moscow  
A woman looks at a plastic Santa Claus in Moscow's famous Gum department store. Santa, a newcomer in post-communist Europe, is now a ubiquitous fixture in dozens of eastern European cities. (AP)

## Clinton, Kohl end emotional visits of troops in Bosnia

By LAURENCE MCQUILLAN

SARAJEVO (Reuters) - German Chancellor Helmut Kohl, paying a pre-Christmas visit to German troops in Sarajevo, thanked his men on Tuesday for doing a fantastic job while serving in the NATO-led peacekeeping mission to Bosnia.

Kohl's visit came one day after US President Bill Clinton left Bosnia, following a highly charged one-day visit in which he thanked American troops serving with NATO and drove home a hard message to the country's political leaders.

Kohl also said the German contingent would stay in the Balkan nation for as long as it took to cement peace.

"Those of us who have experienced destruction in Germany in World War Two can appreciate the importance of the presence of soldiers here," he told his men assembled on parade in the rain at their Rajlovac barracks.

Kohl, 67, was 15 when his home town of Ludwigsafen was destroyed.

"Riding through Sarajevo I saw how it is when war comes to a city. This war was a very horrible thing."

Kohl echoed Clinton on Tuesday, saying: "We will stay with our partners here as long as it is necessary." During his visit Kohl, accompanied by his defence minister, Volker Ruehe, will also meet the three members of the collective Bosnian presidency and leaders of Bosnia's four religious groups.

As he disembarked from a white twin-engine German air force plane on the tarmac of Sarajevo airport, which still bears the marks of the city's savage siege, Kohl was met by Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic.

It is Kohl's first visit to Bosnia and to the German troops participating in the 35,000-strong NATO force since last year.

It is the German forces first armed mission outside Germany

since World War Two.

The multinational NATO-led peacekeeping force was deployed in Bosnia after the Dayton peace accords were signed in December, 1995.

The day before Clinton made an emotional first visit to the Bosnian capital, where he gave a strong speech in the ornate National Theater after being welcomed by the Sarajevo Philharmonic Orchestra.

It played Schubert's Unfinished Symphony as a symbol of what had been achieved and what remained to be done to secure peace in the war-ravaged country - a theme Clinton took up throughout his trip.

"I come before you with a message for those in whose hands the future of Bosnia lies - its leaders and its people. For in the end the future is up to you, not to the Americans, not to the Europeans and not to anybody else," he said in his speech.

The leaders of Bosnia's three ethnic factions had made a "fateful choice for peace" when they signed the Dayton peace accords in Ohio two years ago, ending the country's three-and-a-half year war, he said.

"But their responsibility and yours did not end on that day. In fact it only began. Your responsibility is to turn the documents signed in Dayton into a living reality. To make good on the pledge to bring Bosnia together in one country with two multi-ethnic parts sharing a common destiny."

Clinton met all three members of Bosnia's collective presidency and later had a private meeting with the Serb member Momcilo Krajisnik and another with his bitter rival, Serb Republic President Biljana Plavsic.

In his address Clinton thanked the Moslem presidency chairman Alija Izetbegovic and Croat member Kresimir Zubak but did not mention Krajisnik, who has been accused of obstructing the work of the joint presidency. Krajisnik did not appear to be present in the the-

ater.

In a clear warning to those who are not meeting their commitments under Dayton, Clinton said: "Those who rise to that responsibility will have the full support of the US and the international community. Those who shirk it will isolate themselves."

In a clear signal of his support for the peace process Clinton last week indefinitely extended the mandate of some 8,500 US troops serving with the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia and admitted that setting deadlines for their withdrawal had been a mistake.

Speaking to a packed hangar at an airbase near the northeastern town of Tuzla where US troops are based, he underlined to them the importance of their mission.

"In spite of all you have done, I think it is imperative that we not stop until the peace here has a life of its own, until it can endure without us. We have worked too hard to let this go," he said and thanked Congress for backing him.

He quoted Republican Senator Bob Dole, who accompanied him on the trip, as telling him the peace process was like a football game that was in its final quarter.

"Who wants to walk off the field and forfeit the game? We ought to stay here, finish the game and take home the win for the world and for freedom. And that's exactly what I intend to do."

It was Clinton's only allusion to the extension of the troops' mandate.

Over and over he thanked the troops for their work in Bosnia which, he said, was "no longer the powder keg at the heart of Europe because of you and I cannot thank you enough."

The empty chair on the stage during the Sarajevo orchestra's performance, to symbolize the seven members killed by sniper fire and shelling during the war, was a poignant reminder to all present that the job is far from over.

## In postwar Germany's worst corporate deceit case Property tycoon Schneider gets 81-month prison sentence for fraud

By DAVID CROSSLAND

FRANKFURT (Reuters) - Disgraced property tycoon Juergen Schneider was convicted of fraud and sentenced to jail by a Frankfurt court yesterday in Germany's biggest case of corporate deceit since World War II.

But Judge Heinrich Gehrke granted the 63-year-old's wish to spend Christmas at home with his family as he saw no risk of Schneider fleeing the country.

Gehrke also lambasted Schneider's creditor banks for "unfathomable recklessness" in lending him billions of marks without conducting proper checks.

The banks' failing encouraged Schneider to dupe them and was one reason why his sentence was more lenient than the term of almost eight years the prosecution had demanded, Gehrke said.

"The banks ignored warning signs the size of a barn door and let nothing stop them make their expected profit," Gehrke said in a two-hour explanation of the verdict.

Schneider, once Germany's most celebrated building magnate, was sentenced to six years and nine months in jail. Taking into account 32 months already spent in custody, he is likely to be released in less than two years, the judge said.



Juergen Schneider and his wife, Claudia, leave the courtroom. (AP)

It could be one or two months before he starts serving the term.

During the six-month trial, Schneider had shown he was not a hard-boiled, big-time fraudster but a straightforward man obsessed with impressing his father and refurbishing buildings to the highest standards, whatever the cost.

"He was a workaholic who nevertheless shunned the high life associated with his wealth. There was no golf club, no yachts, no Rolls-Royce or aircraft. He didn't even take a holiday in Acapulco," Gehrke said.

Schneider, impeccably dressed in a dark blue suit, stared impassively at the judge as he read out the sentence.

He later appeared before reporters with tears in his eyes but declined to make a statement and left the court with his wife and daughter, his most immediate wish granted - to eat his Christmas goose at home.

He later appeared before reporters with tears in his eyes but declined to make a statement and left the court with his wife and daughter, his most immediate wish granted - to eat his Christmas goose at home.

# India's not-so-golden jubilee

By JOHN CHALMERS

NEW DELHI - India's 50th anniversary of independence from Britain was supposed to usher in a year of jubilation.

But with the economy in the doldrums and a soap opera of political wrangling hampering the drive for liberalization and then starting the countdown to yet another general election, the jubilee has not been so golden.

After 50 years of freedom, 36 percent of India's 930 million people live below the poverty line, a measure of basic nutrition needs. Figures from a World Development Report show 62% of women and 35% of men are illiterate. Caste violence, religious tensions and corruption are endemic.

British wartime leader Winston Churchill is said to have sneered at the idea of giving up India, predicting that power would end up in the hands of "rascals and rogues" and that the country would be "lost in political squabbles".

Judging from the vitriol which has splattered from the pens of newspaper editors in recent weeks, some think Churchill has at last been proven right.

The countdown to the country's second elections in less than two years - which will install the seventh prime minister since 1989 - began earlier this month when a rag-tag coalition of parties resigned from government.

The United Front, an alliance of regional groups, communists and free-marketers, fell because it refused to drop a party accused of tacitly supporting the suspected killers of former premier Rajiv

Gandhi.

The Congress party, which was dumped by voters in 1996 amid allegations of corruption, had set the ouster of the party as the price for its continued support to the minority coalition.

Critics say the move by Congress, which has ruled India for all but five years since 1947, was a thinly veiled attempt to maneuver itself back into power.

The United Front's fall has triggered a jostle by Congress and the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) for alliances with the country's increasingly potent regional parties to secure a majority in the election.

"What is missing...is any discussion about what they intend to do once they come to power," the *Times of India* complained in an editorial on the power-plays.

"There is not even a pretense of standing for a different set of economic or social policies." Public opinion of politicians runs low - many are seen as consumed by their own vested, and sometimes dubious, interests.

The Election Commission reckons that of the 13,952 candidates who contested the general election last year, more than one in ten were facing criminal charges.

Ashis Nandy, a political analyst at the Center for the Study of Developing Societies in New Delhi, says he expects little more than a reconfiguration of the same or similar forces to emerge from the vote, which is due in early March.

He argues that the instability of the political parties and their protagonists' lack of long-term goals or vision empowers the country's



Pavement dwellers try to stay warm in New Delhi during a cold wave yesterday. With the economy in the doldrums and national politics a shambles, the subcontinent's 50th anniversary has been largely anti-climactic.

democratic institutions, such as the judiciary, and so ironically brings an underlying stability.

Purno Sangma, a parliamentary speaker, has a similar view. "For some time we may have to live with coalition governments," he said. "But as a nation, what is important is the stability of the system, and we have that."

Tell that to the relatives of 61 villagers - men, women and children - who were massacred recently by an army of upper-caste landowners in Bihar, India's poorest state.

Indeed, India's 2,500-year-old caste system has begun to creak as expectations rise among the lowest on society's long ladder. They are

now agitating for better wages, better jobs and a redistribution of land.

That has given rise to a proliferation of local-interest parties and leaders such as Laloo Prasad Yadav, a charismatic figure from Bihar who champions the cause of the lower castes.

Spurred by the introspection and bureaucracy in New Delhi, it has

also allowed state governments to flex their muscles.

"The word 'industrialization' is humming in Gujarat's air," Dilip Parikh, chief minister of the western state of Gujarat, told a meeting of the World Economic Forum conference in New Delhi. "Above all, the government is investor-friendly."

Such language was unheard of until recent years in the country's states, several of which are now making an economic success of their growing autonomy.

But economic issues do need to be tackled at the center.

The reform process which began six years ago has lifted incomes for many, but few benefits have filtered down to the majority who depend on agriculture to eke out a living.

Although liberalization did breathe life into the economy after years of disastrous socialist and centralized planning, growth has stalled off because of slowing demand in investment and manufacturing output growth.

"The difficulty is seeing whether there will be a turning point," said Ashok Desai, former consultant to Manmohan Singh, the finance minister credited with kick-starting reform.

Analysts reckon that, with government spending strapped by an unwieldy fiscal deficit, corporate profitability low and the risk of a spillover of Asia's financial turmoil, growth is unlikely to top six percent in 1998/99 (April-March).

There is, too, the question mark hanging over the pace and scope of further economic reform under a new government.

But caretaker Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral is one among many who believe it would be hard for any government to swim against the tide of liberalization.

"I am confident the political consensus... will steer the economy toward further reform, irrespective of the composition of the government," he told business leaders in New Delhi. (Reuters)

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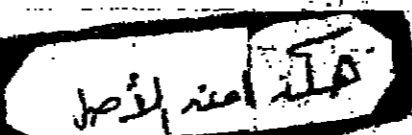
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# Nicholson - As good as it gets

By STEVE JAMES

Jack Nicholson is...well, Jack Nicholson. He is waxing philosophical, talking about growing up and growing old in Hollywood and about the stars who inspired him.

Pulling on a Camel filter, he matter-of-factly welcomes the idea that just about everyone in Hollywood thinks that he's some sort of god.

"I don't like to think of myself that way," he said, before continuing with his impeccable timing. "[But] I don't mind if somebody else thinks that..."

All right, so he's not really a deity, but Nicholson certainly is idolized as a demigod by millions of film fans, as well as those in the business of making movies.

Even the co-stars Helen Hunt, Greg Kinnear and Cuba Gooding Jr. in his latest film, *As Good As It Gets*, acted like fans just talking about being in a film with Nicholson.

"It took me a long time to get past the point where I was just standing on the set pointing and saying 'You're Jack Nicholson!'" said Kinnear.

When Nicholson fixes one with that eye, one brow raised quizzically, mockingly, nearly four decades of movie images flash by. From schlock Roger Corman B-movies to his breakthrough in *Easy Rider* (1969), through hits such as *Carnal Knowledge* (1970), *Chinatown* (1974), *Reds* (1981), and *The Shining* (1980), Nicholson is that rarity: a true Hollywood legend.

One of the most popular actors in Hollywood, who has also written, produced and directed films and who has worked with several great filmmakers - Michelangelo Antonioni, Roman Polanski, Mike Nichols, Milos Forman - Nicholson exudes the confidence that comes with knowing he can pick and choose what he does. Who else could go from his extremely understated performance in Antonioni's *The Passenger* (1975) to his way over the top Joker in *Batman* (1989)?

Witness *As Good As It Gets*, in which he plays a cynical, aging writer romancing waitress Helen Hunt. The film won Nicholson best actor honors from the National Board of Review three weeks before its scheduled December 25th US opening.

In a recent interview the star, who turned 60 this year, reflected on a Hollywood career that began as an office boy in MGM's cartoon department.

It has brought him the Best Actor Academy Award for *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Best Supporting Actor Oscar for *Terms of Endearment* and Oscar nominations for eight other roles.

"I've done a lot of films...I make 'em and then let the chips fall where they may, and I always hope they're going to do great. [But] I can't think of a movie I ever made that was easy to make," he said.

"It's only a few years ago that I woke up one morning and said

'Holy S---! You gave your life to this?'

"I started off as a guy who loved good-looking young women... I latched into the studio, I liked it [films], I got drawn into it. [Now] I'm hooked on it," Nicholson said, with a knowing look from the man with a four-decade reputation as a Hollywood Lothario who still loves beautiful women.

The father of two children out of wedlock, Nicholson had a five-year marriage early in his career to actress Sandra Knight and for many years was the constant companion of actress Anjelica Huston.

"I think as you get older, the range of things you're trying to illustrate broadens," he said of his part in *As Good As It Gets*, where he plays a man with an obsessive-compulsive disorder.

Nicholson relishes playing the wizened elder statesman off-screen too. "Everywhere I go, they're shocked by my actual age," he said with that mischievous grin. "I'm not a health fiend. I mean, I do my professional job to get looking right for that, but I also don't resist a lot of things that other people resist."

His hair seriously thinning on top and possessing a not insubstantial pot belly, the closest Nicholson comes to fitness, apart from the occasional round of golf, is sitting courtside at Los Angeles Lakers' basketball games.

But if his body is starting to show the wear of four decades of Hollywood living, his mind is as sharp as the dialogue of one of his best films - *Five Easy Pieces*. He describes himself as the New Old. "I remember people in their sixties before and they didn't look like us!"

"They" would be some of the old screen actors who inspired the young Nicholson to leave New Jersey and go to California to make it in the movies. "I was a fan of the movies since childhood. I could list you a thousand actors that I admired - Charley Grapewin, I learned a lot from. When I'm twice removed and trying to decide where I'm going commercially right now, I think about Wallace Beery."

Unlike the method actors of his generation like Robert De Niro, Al Pacino and Dustin Hoffman, Nicholson's view of his craft is less intense.

"My theory is that 85 percent of any character you play is not only in common but is exactly the same, and you have to isolate the other 15% and that's what you act. The rest, you just hope you're relaxed enough to let it be."

He too has his idol. "With my generation, it was always [Marlon] Brando, and always will be Brando."

As for directing, which he has not done since his 1990's film *The Two Jakes*, he said: "I'm thinking about it."

And retirement, is he thinking of that, too? "I would never retire. But I might stop working because I don't want to, but I'm not thinking that way today. After this film, I'm an unemployed man," Nicholson said. (Reuters)



Nicholson's theory about acting is that '85% of any character you play is not only in common but is exactly the same, and you have to isolate the other 15% and that's what you act.' (File photo)

## Fringe theater for the community

By HELEN KAYE

In English, the word *notzar* means "created," the name the Created Theater company has given itself in Hebrew. It also applies to the space in Jaffa where CT is presenting the Israeli premiere of *Penthesilea* by German expressionist playwright Heinrich von Kleist, which opened Sunday night.

The audience follows the action on three stages built into what was once the Alhambra movie theater, a space the group has literally created for itself. CT members, armed with all the proper permits and supervision, have done all the construction, from laying floors to revamping the electrical system.

CT is a community-minded fringe theater "that just happened," according to its artistic director, Avishai Milstein, who's also the translator and director of *Penthesilea*. "A group of us started to work on [Edward] Bond's *War Plays* trilogy as an antidote to the Gulf War."

One of those plays went to the Acre Festival that year (1991), and another was one of the inaugural plays of the ZOA House Fringe Center. In 1994 they did the third, *Tin Can People*, at the Reading Power Station, a powerhouse production that earned CT rave reviews. Milstein himself won the Ada Ben-Nahum translation prize for *War Plays*.

*Penthesilea* is CT's fifth production and a classic of the German theater. Premiered at the Alhambra earlier this year, the drama made its world premiere in October at Aachen, Germany, as part of an Israeli contingent to the Theater Dialogue Festival.

Set against the backdrop of the 10-year Trojan War, the play tells of the doomed love between Penthesilea (Dali Milstein), queen of the Amazons, and the Greek hero Achilles (Dudu Ben-Ze'ev), but "the reality of the play is war," Milstein says.

"The love story is played out against a war matrix. There is blood and gore, but the spine of the play is the will to dominate, and that is where *Penthesilea* comes home to us."

Milstein lists some of our own struggles such as Zionism vs. the Palestinians, secular vs. religious, the left vs. the right. In the play, the battles are between the genders, guerrilla forces (the Amazons) vs. a regular army (the Greeks), a settled (the Greeks) vs. a nomadic (the Amazons) culture.

Most of CT's plays are chosen so that the majority of the company can be in them. They work together because they want to and "because none of the people here need this place for a living or a career," Milstein points out.

"There's about 20 of us, and we're all working in the theater. This isn't some sort of megalomaniacal directorial dream, but a bunch of people who want dialogue in the theater. We're a real ensemble group, and we're constantly reinventing both the content and the framework, so the name is very apt."

CT chose Jaffa as its home base because "it's a microcosm of Israeli society. Here Arabs, Jews, veterans and new immigrants, the very rich and the very poor all live close together," Milstein continues. "Also, we have a connection with the community through our educational projects."

Tamar Milstein (no relation to Avishai) coordinates CT's community outreach program and "the idea of working through schools is to make theater that speaks to the local community," she says, pointing out that for many, the theater is like a foreign country.

There are three programs. The first involves Jewish-Arab interaction at the high-school level in which the students learn what is involved in the making of a production. Supervised by CT members - and all participate in the outreach projects at some time or another - the kids themselves write the material and then put it all together. They choose a director, a designer for set and lights, build the set and so forth.

The second project involves five encounters in which elementary school children are introduced to different theater elements such as the actor, make-up, and theater games. The third project, that of a junior CT ensemble drawn from local youth, is in the making, she says.

The projects "are effective," she continues "because theater is really something very distant from their daily lives. As for the Arab-Jewish encounter, it would be utopian to say that we have brought them together, but each encounter is a step forward."

A \$2,500 prize from the New Israel Foundation and a grant from the Abraham Foundation will help the work along. For the rest, CT's work is funded by small subsidies from the Arts and Culture Administration, the Tel Aviv municipality, Matan (a youth arts association), and corporate sponsorships.

## Curtains for children's theater?

By HELEN KAYE

The Orna Porat Children and Youth Theater (CYT) will have to close if the political strife between the Treasury and the teachers isn't settled soon. Yesterday, representatives from 40 of the country's youth-involved arts institutions held a protest outside the Knesset.

"Schools and local authorities canceled 30 performances last month alone," said CYT board chairman Micki Yerushalmi, "and

the school year accounts for most of our annual activity. If these sanctions continue, losses will force the theater to shut down by the end of February."

While arts institutions such as orchestras or dance companies have other sources of income, CYT's sole audiences are children and youth. Last year they played 700 performances in 250 locations across the country, especially development towns, for an audience of some 400,000 children from kindergarten to 12th grade.

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Vanessa Mae bridges the gap between classical and popular music.

amazing technique and vivacity, as was demonstrated in her previous albums. But she wants more, and she attains that extra dimension in her latest album, *Storm* (EMI 7243 8 21800 2 9).

*Storm* is a stormy album. It is provocative as she likes to be. It is vintage Mae because it is what the violinist likes to do best: play the violin from her heart, directly to the soul of her listeners.

*Storm* incorporates many musical worlds. It has Bach, Vivaldi and Offenbach in ways classical music buffs might find difficult to recognize. But Mae depicts the summer haze and the storm in Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, for example, in a most evocative manner. Her version of the Offenbach *Cancon* is charming, and her modern improvisation of Bach is inspired.

But then there are the world music parts of the album - lyrics, back-up voices and all - that represent a different kind of Mae. Here, she is more serene, more subdued, more calm and less the angry youth who would take the world apart.

These numbers are very touching, especially when, within this world music aura, Mae's violin suddenly soars with pure classical beauty.

*Storm* is an album that, as its title suggests, takes you by storm. It is an album for the daring and definitely not for the conventional listener who shies away from the 21st century. *Storm* is an album that takes you on a spiritual journey, rocks you and soothes you.

It is an album for many palates. And what a sumptuous meal it makes.

## Dvorak by the score for orchestras and singers

By MICHAEL AIZENSTADT

One would think there was a monumental Dvorak anniversary in the air. The Ramat Gan Chamber Choir sings Dvorak this week; the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra opens a new subscription series on Sunday with an all-Dvorak program; the International Youth Symphony Orchestra opens its series of concerts with Dvorak's eighth symphony; Peter Schreier sings Dvorak's Biblical songs in Jerusalem; and the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra presents the composer's *Stabat Mater* within its Liturgical concerts next week.

So what Dvorak anniversary are we celebrating exactly? It's hard to imagine that so many organizations would come up with two weeks of dedicated Dvorak by mere coincidence.

Dvorak was born on September 8, 1841 (156 years ago) and died on May 1, 1904

(93 years ago). A little late for the 150th anniversary of his birth or the 90th of his death, and quite premature for the 100th anniversary of his demise.

In fact, this wealth of Dvorak concerts is indeed coincidental. To begin with, local music organizations never share information with one another. What's more, each one in this case has its own reason. The major motivation is the audience. This rich Dvorak celebration will enable the avid music lover to savor the many facets of one of the greatest composers of all time.

Like many other Eastern European composers of the previous century, the Bohemian-born Dvorak was a very nationalistic composer. He sought out the folk music of his people and tried to use it in his works.

But it was not only his own roots that interested Dvorak. When he was working in America, he made a point of studying the local indigenous music as well, and echoes

of jazz and spirituals can be detected in his ninth ("New World") symphony, probably his most popular and most performed work to date.

Dvorak wrote in almost every possible musical style and genre, as the upcoming concerts suggest. It is difficult to say where he excelled more. The eighth and ninth symphonies, the later played by the IPO, are some of the finest examples of 19th-century symphonies.

But then again, his Biblical songs, for example, combine his obvious yearning for folk music in a cycle of 10 tender songs which capture the beauty of the Bible and the charming lyricism of folk motifs.

Dvorak's sacred music is in a different realm altogether.

In it, be they his masses, requiem or the glorious *Stabat Mater*, he combines first-rate orchestral writing, love of the big choral forms, and his sense of the dramatic occasion. The *Stabat Mater* is an evocative mini-drama; it is one of the composer's

most grand, sweeping works.

But there is even more to Dvorak, and not all will be heard this week.

Dvorak was also a very accomplished chamber-music composer, with 14 amazing string quartets and many other compositions. He wrote 10 operas, most of which, like the *Dimitrij*, are very nationalistic works. But one opera defies nationality. *Rusalka*, the Little Mermaid story in operatic guise, is Dvorak's most touching work. It is the story of a young mermaid who becomes a woman and learns to face the pangs of love.

It is a wonderful opera, a song of praise to the soothing beauty of nature and the power of love. Israeli soprano Larisa Tutuev, who will sing the composer's *Stabat Mater* in Jerusalem next week, was recently chosen to sing the role in Prague's national theater. But until that happens, you might want to purchase the English National Opera's video of the opera, in David Pountney's mesmerizing production.

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## Retraining for growth

The popular British movie *The Full Monty* opens with a promotional film from 20 years ago touting a booming industrial town, whose economy was based on steel production. Flash to today: the town's factories lie idle, and the film goes on to tell the story of a few unemployed steelworkers who decide to reinvent themselves as male strippers. Though the movie is a comedy, it illustrates the tragic side of modern economies in transition and the plight of those left behind, such as textile workers in Ofakim and other centers of unemployment.

No country, from the post-industrial United States to developing countries such as India and the Far Eastern "tigers," has been spared the dislocations that characterize the transition from labor-intensive agriculture- and manufacturing-based economies to education-intensive service and high-tech economies. In this global economic revolution, Israel is well positioned because it already has one of the most dynamic high-tech business sectors in the world. A society, however, is not only measured by its cutting edge, but by whether it abandons those stuck in industries brought down by the very success of a high-wage economy.

When those unemployed are in "development towns" like Ofakim, where new immigrants were settled as part of a scheme to populate the periphery, society's obligation is even greater. We do not do those suffering from unemployment a favor, however, by perpetuating numerous myths surrounding this issue.

Many have pointed out, for example, that the current number of unemployed is roughly equal to the number of foreign workers — about 150,000.

Reducing the number of foreign workers is a good idea, but as a way to avoid a growing social problem and to help the Palestinian economy — not ours. Freeing up jobs paying the minimum wage (or less) by expelling foreign workers will not help a textile worker with 30 years of experience.

It is also irresponsible to sow dreams of Japanese-style bullet trains — as the Ben-Gurion University president Avishay Braverman did on TV Monday night — that would put Beersheba half an hour from Tel Aviv. Add more buses and build better roads, perhaps, but at the price of roughly \$30 million per kilometer, high-speed

trains only make sense for cities much larger than Beersheba (population 160,000). In any case such trains have not proven to be catalysts for economic growth.

Nor should unemployment be blamed on the peace process, which has enabled the opening of Israeli factories in Egypt and Jordan. Manufacturing will naturally migrate towards cheap labor, if not in our neighborhood than further afield. If anything, a company that moves its low-skill work across the border may be in a better position to employ higher-skilled labor here.

The fact that the number of low-skilled jobs is dwindling is not only inevitable, but a positive trend for the economy as a whole. The way to deal with the problem is not to hold on to such jobs, but to help workers move on to better jobs that are less threatened with obsolescence.

It would be a mistake, therefore, to dismiss all of the recommendations of Labor and Social Affairs Minister Eli Yishai, despite his penchant for hurling obscure epithets ("you're an eel") at Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman. Though some of the government-sponsored make-work projects he recommends may not make sense, it is both right and economical to pay for as much retraining as necessary to put unemployed workers back on their feet.

Yishai claims that his NIS 128 million employment program will save the government NIS 540 million in unemployment payments. Even if the savings turn out to be smaller, every shekel spent on retraining is much preferable to paying people not to work; such outlays not only help the economy, but restore human dignity.

At the same time, it is critical that the politicians operating on the ailments of the economy remember the Hippocratic oath: First, do no harm.

Neeman is right that busting the budget target in the name of fighting unemployment will only postpone the economic recovery that is the real job-creation engine. Promises of economic growth cannot solve the immediate problem of today's unemployed, but added deficit spending or tax hikes would only prolong the current economic slowdown. The two goals need not be in conflict: Yishai's retraining proposals should be funded by making cuts elsewhere in the budget.



## The real enemy

By DAVID KIMCHE

Hundreds of thousands of Israelis came face to face with the real enemy for the first time on Monday evening. *Popolitika*, that raucous, annoying, yet enormously popular TV program was broadcast from Ofakim, and for many in the audience it was their first real glimpse of life in what is euphemistically called a "development town."

The real enemy, of Jew and Arab alike, is the abject poverty of so many people, in Israel and in the entire Middle East.

The Ofakim broadcast highlighted the hardship, the misery, the humiliation, the despair and hopelessness which is the lot of the poor and the unemployed. Their circumstances are the same, whether they live in Ofakim, Sderot, Dimona or in the the Beduin townships of the Negev, or anywhere else for that matter.

Poverty is the enemy at the gate which has to be fought continuously and relentlessly. Poverty knows no national boundaries. We, naturally, are concerned with the spiraling number of poor and unemployed living in Israel. We listen, aghast, to the tales of woe of the people of Ofakim, and watch, helplessly, the daily demonstrations of the growing *army of the unemployed*. As the pace of economic growth slows to a near standstill, the social fabric of Israeli society is increasingly affected, with the numbers below the poverty line growing by the day.

Are the causes only social and economic, or are there political reasons for this sad state of affairs? Has the impasse in the peace process been involved in the slowdown of Israel's economy and on the burgeoning number of unemployed, as one of the better-known residents of the Negev, the Baba Baruch, claimed on *Popolitika*?

ANOTHER PARTICIPANT, the learned president of Ben-Gurion University in Beersheba, Prof. Avishay Braverman, backed up this claim in a conversation I had

with him after the program.

"In the Negev, the center of unemployment, we are suffering twice," he declared. "First, because funds that had been earmarked for the development of the Negev have been transferred by our government to Judea and Samaria. And second, because investments from abroad have

**In the Middle East, poverty is the ultimate challenge to both Arab and Jew**

slowed to a trickle due to the crisis in the peace process."

Investors, added Braverman, had been encouraged by the prospects of peace, and the Negev was particularly attractive because of its proximity to Egypt, Gaza and Jordan — the true meeting place between Israel and its neighbors. But now the pendulum has swung the other way, and the uncertain future and prospects of growing hostility and possible violence in the region are keeping the investors at bay.

The former Likud deputy mayor of Eilat, Muky Meltzer, who has for years been doing business with Egypt and other Arab countries, points an accusing finger at the government. Egypt was opening up to Israeli businessmen in a big way, he says. So were countries in the Persian Gulf. "Now they tell me 'come back after Netanyahu goes.'"

The Arab world, however, is only a small part of the story. In the US and especially in Europe, prospective investors are looking elsewhere or, at best, have adopted a "wait and see" attitude.

The impasse in the peace process could have a much wider impact, however.

It is no secret that the economy

of the region as a whole is in dire straits. The Middle East is one of the few regions in the world to have experienced a prolonged decline in real per-capita income. It is the only region in the world which has witnessed a long period of declining productivity — a 6% cumulative drop from 1960-1990 as compared to a 54% gain for southeast Asia!

The region, moreover, is witnessing a population explosion, with its population doubling in 26-29 years. Nearly 45% of the population is under 14 years of age, giving rise to poor education on the one hand and to massive unemployment on the other. We have seen the misery of unemployment in Ofakim; it is compounded many times over in neighboring countries, creating a dangerous breeding ground for fundamentalism and violence.

The great hope for the future of the region lay in the peace process. Peace, it was felt, would encourage regional projects, would draw in foreign investment, and would help turn round the region's static and negative economic trends. Tourism would grow, trade would increase, economies would begin to flourish.

Such a development would have a direct impact on Israel. Not only would it lessen the dangers of fundamentalist terrorism but it would propel our own economy forward, for Israel in a region at peace would become very attractive indeed for outside investors: With its advanced infrastructure, its educated manpower, its high-tech industry, its innovations, Israel has a great deal to offer; provided it is an Israel at peace.

The scourge of poverty and unemployment must be tackled at every level — social, economic, and not least, political. Only in this manner can the real enemy facing us be conquered and overcome.

The writer, a former director general of the foreign ministry, is chairman of the Israel Council on Foreign Relations.

## Health care for all

By MARLENE E. POST

In 50 years Israel has gone from struggling to provide housing and clean drinking water to multitudes of immigrants to striving to provide a computer for every child. The history of Hadassah's pro-activism in this country is much the same.

We, too, began by seeing to the basic needs for physical survival. We, too, have moved on from there to asking what we can do to improve the quality of life in Israel, now that the state's existence is secured.

Israel's economic and social fortitude may convey the sense that the hardest work is done. Most of the exiles desiring aliyah have been gathered and there are beginnings of real peace between Israel and its neighbors.

But as the largest Zionist organization in the world with more than 300,000 members, we understand our task is far from complete. Today we are concerned about ensuring that Israel's values live up to the prophetic ideals of social justice and peace.

As an organization of women leaders, Hadassah has always stood for the fundamental needs of people: medical services, education and social welfare. We are concerned decisions being taken today by a predominantly male government threaten to harm that very basic building block of society: human welfare.

As we did when we opened our first medical facility in 1913 — a maternity clinic in Jerusalem's Old City — we again need to assert leadership and demand that the national agenda does not ignore the needs of the people it should serve.

Government plans to introduce changes in the National Health Law will make health services more expensive and less reliable. There is a real danger that only the affluent will receive adequate health care and that a disproportionate amount of money will be channeled away from the neediest cases.

Among those who might not receive life-saving health services are the poor, the elderly, infants, immigrants and anyone that requires chronic care. We are concerned that the universal health services that are among Israel's proudest achievements — from the Tipat Halav mother and baby clinics to the health funds — will be seriously undermined by the new legislation.

The first group to be harmed by such a policy will be women. As mothers and caretakers, women are inclined to tend to the needs of others before their own. Many women will try to suppress and ignore their symptoms of illness before deciding to spend on themselves money that could be used for other members of the family. In the case of illnesses such as cancer, that benefit from early detection, this could be fatal.

There are already worrisome signs that the level of women's health in Israel is not keeping pace with that of men. The Israel Association for the Advancement of Women's Health has found that although Israeli women, like most women, live longer than men, their life expectancy ranks around 20th in the world in contrast with the life expectancy of Israeli men that is second or third in the world. Female mortality rates for heart disease, cancer and strokes in this country are among the highest in developed countries. Male mortality rates are among the lowest. The reasons for these discrepancies are unclear and we are dismayed they are not getting the attention they deserve.

Hadassah's motto, from the prophet Jeremiah, is: "The healing of the daughter of my people." We challenge the leaders of today to muster the compassion of Jeremiah and think of society's weak and needy when they make their decisions. We realize every nation has to make tough decisions as to what services the state will provide. But we urge the government to keep in mind that human lives cannot be measured in shekels. Its decisions have to be based on social and human values and not only on cost-benefit considerations.

As Zionists who have provided health and social services to the people of Israel for 85 years we call on all Jewish organizations around the world to join us in helping the government meet the nation's fundamental needs.

Our goal today is to help Israel clearly demonstrate the Jewish values of compassion, tolerance, and peace. Let all of us present in Israel for the World Zionist Congress unite around these shared values and not let ideological disputes divide us or distract us from the true Zionist mission — the care of our people.

Marlene Edith Post is National President of Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### ORDINARY FOLK

Sir, - What has happened to the dream of an equal society in Israel? One reads constantly in the gossip columns of the extravagant bashes thrown by and for our political leaders and superstars, whilst at the same time, of the starkly tragic growing number of those living below the poverty line.

It is not surprising that resentment and envy is rife among the ordinary people when even the Minister of Defense celebrates his birthday with 1,000 guests present.

Is this "the stuff dreams are made of?" Once upon a time, our leaders and our superstars were just ordinary folk who still had an element of social awareness and didn't rub the noses of those less fortunate in the dust.

Israeli society needs some examples from the top, but I doubt if they are to be found in the gossip columns.

ZELDA HARRIS

Netanya.

### CHEATING AGAIN

Sir, - The practically unanimous cabinet decision to give up territory in favor of the Palestinian Authority came rather as a surprise. The closing of the right-wing ranks in favor of a controversial issue so short after the prime minister had nearly been toppled among accusations of having cheated the Likud ministers and Knesset members, is puzzling.

Or should we assume that exactly here is to be found the explanation? Could it be that the hardlin-

ers in the cabinet are for the redeployment proposal exactly because they expect Netanyahu to be cheating again? That now it is the Palestinians and/or Americans who are going to be fooled. But, then, what makes the ministers so sure that it isn't the other way around? Are cheaters immune to being cheated?

BEATE ZILVERSMIDT

Holon.

### ESPRIT D'ESCALIER

Sir, - That the Dutch Jews were robbed blind during WWII is no news to me of course, though about everyone I know tries to explain away this bitter and shameful fact.

But it was a real shocker to me to read (J.P., December 14) that your report "was based in part on

a recently declassified US National Archives document a US consular official prepared in May 1946" — 51 years ago...

The double immorality of that evil fact makes me sick.

PROFESSOR MARGE E. LANDSBERG

Haifa.

### A SUPERNATURAL BEING

Sir, - Rabbi Riskin titles his column of November 14 "Seeing beyond blind faith." I wonder whether he has ever considered the fact that the whole Orthodox world-view of both the Jewish and all other religions is based solely on blind faith. There never has been, and there cannot ever be, any proof offered of the existence of a supernatural being.

Riskin speaks of "A God of consummate compassion and loving kindness"; the Bible offers many contradictions to this thesis, but I would refer him to only one example: Deuteronomy, chapter 21, verses 18-21 where the parents of a stubborn and rebellious son are to take their son to be stoned to death by the men of the city.

MARIUS GARB

Ra'anana.

### UNFAIR BILLS

Sir, - Why am I paying for incoming, unsolicited Pelephone and Cellcom calls (including "air-time") on my Bezeq bill?

Bezeq's practice of billing me for these calls without prior warning of the source of the call or notification of the cost of the calls is not only heavy-handed, but looks a lot like theft.

BETTY SHAMASH

Haifa.

## FROM OUR ARCHIVES

50 years ago: On December 24, 1947, *The Palestine Post* reported that the Jewish suburb of Bat Yam was attacked for the second day in succession and that there was a heavy firing on convoys on the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway. Bab el-Wad was the scene of a convoy battle in which a 22-year-old Jewish passenger, although seriously wounded, replied to the attackers. Coming from the other direction was the High Commissioner escorted by armed cars, while a British plane flew low over the road.

Firing also flared up in the Old City of Jerusalem, marking the fourth week of Arab violence. Two Jews and two Arabs were killed and scores were wounded.

Lo Tufhidenu ("The Unafraid"), the two-masted motor schooner which brought 800 "illegal" immigrants, entered the Haifa Port under heavy British escort. All immigrants were deported to Cyprus.

There were both Jewish and Arab casualties in a two-hour Arab attack on the Jewish Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem. There was also heavy

fighting on the Tel Aviv-Jaffa border where Jews blew up a three-story building and a flour mill which served as a nest for Arab snipers.

25 years ago: On December 24, 1972, *The Jerusalem Post* reported on the planned "thinning out" of Rafah refugee camp. New roads and homes were promised while neither UNRWA nor any other international body was involved in this program.

Alexander Zvielli

Handwritten signature or note in a box at the bottom of the page.

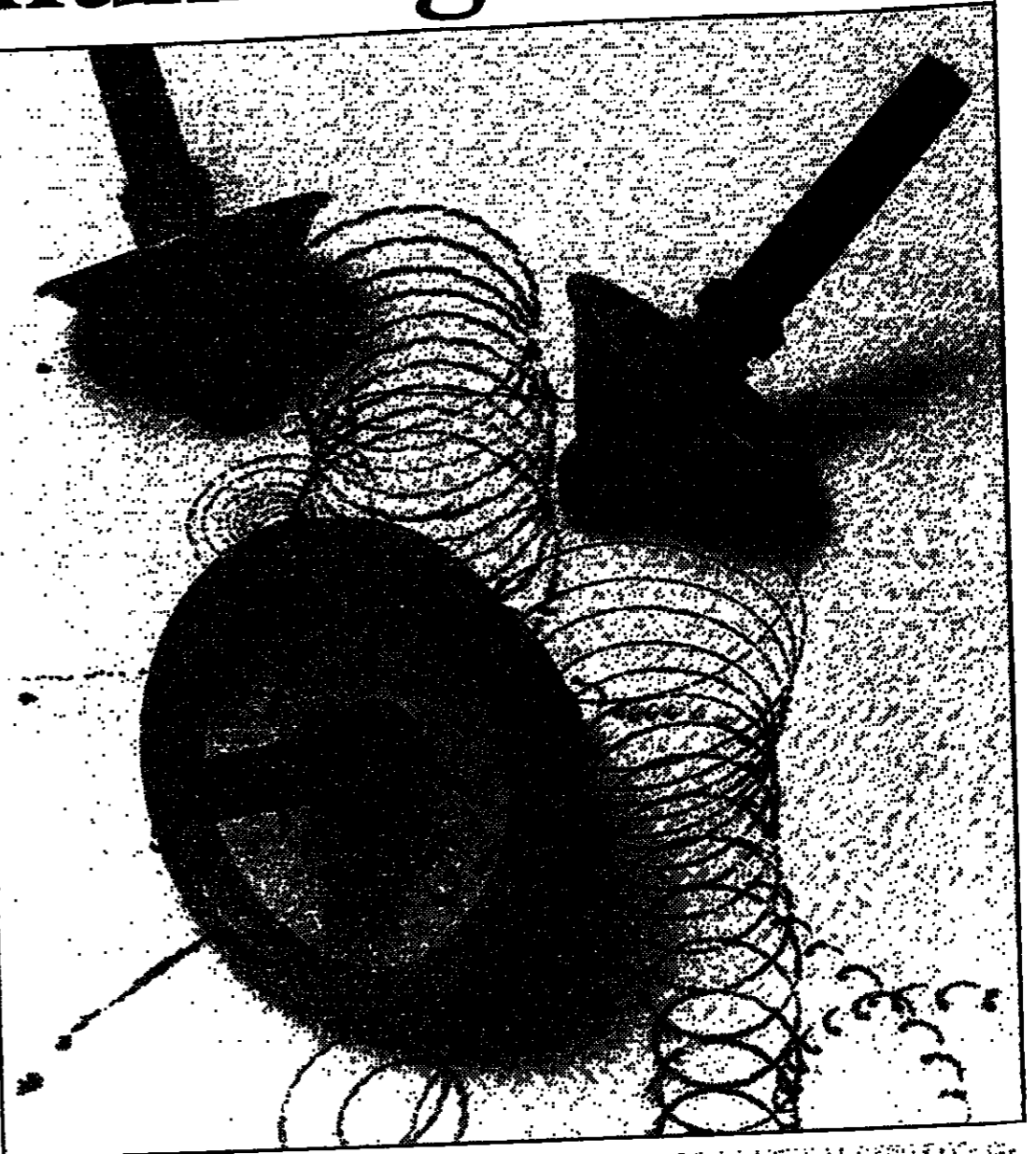
# A new spin on Hanukka gifts

Running the gamut from action heroes and hula-skirted Barbies to snuggly pajamas and a good book, Allison Kaplan Sommer investigates new trends and age-old traditions in Hanukka gift-giving

A young woman walks into Hahn Toy Store in the Ramat Aviv Mall and asks the salesman for the most simple and straightforward Hanukka gift possible - a top. The salesman smiles a condescending grin as he gives his uniformed customer the news: "Nothing," he says, "is simple and straightforward about Hanukka gift-giving anymore." To make his point, he indicates a huge stack of tops in front of her. The display includes more than a dozen different models of tops from the most basic plastic dreidel - which costs only one shekel - to Panorama, a large, elaborate electronic scene from a European manufacturer, priced at NIS 100.

Gone are the days of giving a cuddly teddy bear, today's best seller is a "baby gym," which dangles stimulating objects within baby's reach. Also popular are shape sorters, as are toy xylophones and pianos and any toy like a "baby university," which teaches cause and effect by having the child press a button, causing an object to pop out or make a noise. Trends are less important for those under three, Merom says. "Toys for young children are classics. Grandparents buy the same kind of toys for their grandchildren that their children had." The toy market for older children, by contrast, occupies a different technological universe than they did a generation ago. Sophisticated remote-control cars and games involving lasers are moving quickly off toy-store shelves. Videos and computer games crowd the "most wanted" lists for Hanukka. At the Tel Aviv store CD Stock, sales of video cassettes of the animated *Cinderella* - just rereleased by Disney - are doing well. Still going strong are sales of the recently released live version of *101 Dalmatians*. The most heavily promoted video of the season features

are gelt-oriented - far more interested in cold, hard cash for the holiday than toys, books, or clothes. The survey found that the older the child, the higher the interest in money: 79 percent of those aged 4-6 preferred a present, while just 15% preferred money; 63% of those aged 7-10 wanted a gift, and 28% wanted cash. Once children reached 11-13, a clear majority of 56% expressed a preference for money, and only 38% wanted a gift. Most parents and grandparents prefer gift-giving for Hanukka and keep up that tradition as long as they can. Janine Hayat of Jerusalem says that this year she has put a great deal of energy into buying books for her seven grandchildren, ranging in age from two to seven. "I usually get games, but for some reason I was attracted to books this year. Good books are expensive, and this is a good



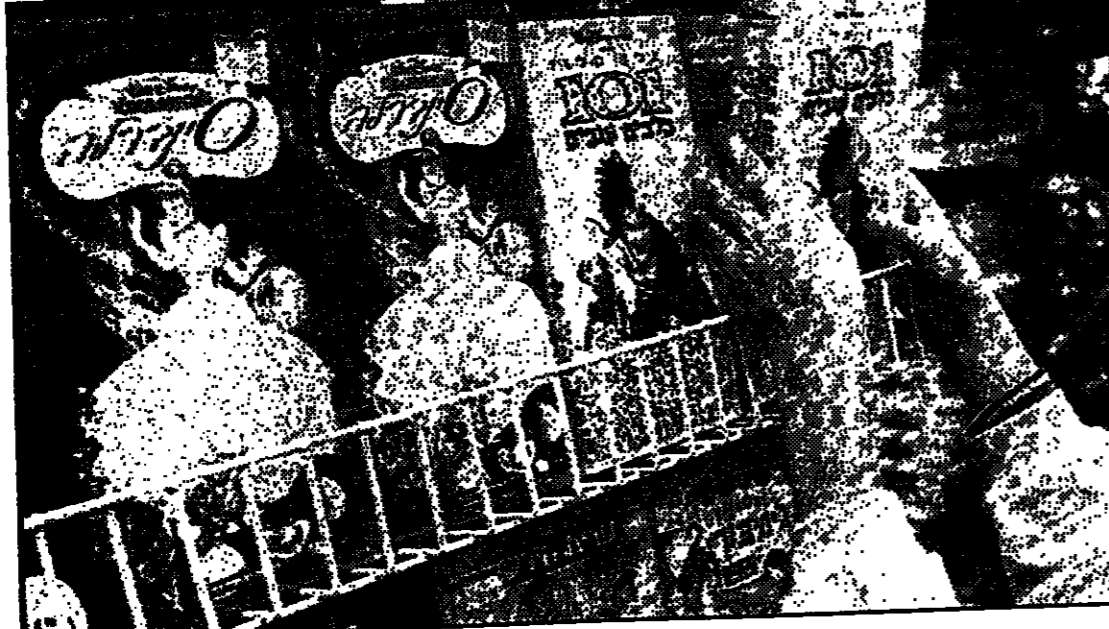
**Gifts of tops and chocolate coins are fine from aunts, cousins and friends, but today's child expects more from his primary gift-givers - and he usually gets it**

## WHAT'S OUT

opportunity to buy them. Each child will get a book and a small toy. And, of course, lots of chocolate and candies and dreidels. I think that surprising the children is an important element of Hanukka. For their birthdays, I tend to get instructions from their parents as to what they want. But surprises are part of the magic of Hanukka." Hayat says he also makes an effort to give her grandchildren the gift of time: taking the children in small groups to a museum or a play during the Hanukka season. Bruria Guttel, another Jerusalem grandmother, believes less in surprises. She has a yearly tradition of inviting the whole family to her house for one of the nights of candle-lighting and giving each of her 13 grandchildren an item of winter clothing for Hanukka. The younger children also get a small toy; the older children get books. With so many grandchildren, she says it is important to maintain a certain uniformity. Guttel says she would "never deal with money; cash will never be an alternative for me. I didn't give my children money for Hanukka, and I wouldn't give money to my grandchildren. Hanukka is not about money." Other parents and grandparents, however, find it harder to resist their children's pressure for a cash gift, particularly as the kids get older. They come to the conclusion that a money gift is better than searching for a toy that might not be used or appreciated. The *Yedioth* survey found that the average amount of money parents give children aged 4-10 is NIS 51. To those aged 11-13, they give an average of NIS 70. The children either spend the cash as pocket money, use it toward buying clothes, or add it to their savings. Etti Kochavi, a Herzliya mother, says her 11-year-old son Oran, in recent years, has strongly urged his grandparents to give him gifts of money, and they usually acquiesce. "At this age, it's really hard to pick out things they want," she says. "What Oran likes is to receive money and save up for something really expensive. Right now, he's decided that he wants a stereo system in his room and he is saving up for that."



Barbie dolls are always big sellers. This year's favorite - Hawaiian Barbie. (Photos by Jonathan Bloom)



Videos and computer games crowd the 'most wanted' lists with Disney's re-released 'Cinderella' and the live version of '101 Dalmatians' doing especially well.



Remote-control cars and laser games are moving off the toy shelves. (Photos by Jonathan Bloom)



Most children - and parents - have tired of last summer's hit, the Tamaguchi electronic pet.



America's favorite dinosaur, Barney, looms large everywhere.

# Siblings without rivalry



By Ruth Mason

"You gave him more than me. No fair!"  
"Give me back my book! He took my book!"  
"Get out of my room!"

Phrases familiar to all but the luckiest parents of siblings. Most parents are subjected to the teasing, tattling and bickering that seem to be part and parcel of sibling relations. But Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish, the authors who popularized psychologist Chaim Ginott's work in *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will*

Talk, say it doesn't have to be so. In *Siblings Without Rivalry*, Faber and Mazlish attempt to give parents concrete skills for dealing with sibling troubles. Like their popular previous book, this one also includes examples from real parents and children, sample dialogues, work sheets and insightful cartoons that bring home their message through images as well as words. The book is based on insights they gleaned from participating for years in Dr. Ginott's parenting groups as well as research carried out on their own parenting groups. Although rivalry seems to come with the territory of being a sibling, Faber and Mazlish say we as parents can make a big difference in our attitudes and words. Here, in a nutshell, are some of their suggestions. 1. Acknowledge your children's feelings about each other. Rather than dismissing a negative emotion, try to understand where it comes from and give it a chance to exist. Child: "You're always with the baby." You: Instead of "No I'm not. Didn't I just play ball with you?"

try, "You don't like my spending so much time with her." Or, give the child in fantasy what he doesn't have in reality: "You wish I'd spend more time with you." 2. Resist the urge to compare. Comparisons can fuel feelings of resentment between your children. Say, for example, you're trying to help your daughter with her homework and in frustration, she lashes out at you. Instead of criticizing by comparing ("Don't you dare call me thick-headed; your sister never talks to me that way"), try describing the problem: "It's hard for me to be helpful when I'm being criticized." 3. Don't try to be fair or equal. Instead, focus on what need the child is expressing. Child: "You gave him more than me." Instead of pointing out the equal sizes of both hamburgers, try saying something like, "Oh, are you still hungry?" 4. Instead of focusing on the aggressor, give attention to the injured party. 5. If you relate to your children differently they will regard them-

selfes differently. If one of your kids acts the bully, emphasize his other qualities. Child to sister about older brother: "Danny said he'd kick the board if we didn't let him play." You: "He knows how to be nice, too, and ask for what he wants in a friendly way." 6. Encourage your kids to find their own solutions to their problems with each other. Express confidence in their ability to do so. A personal illustration: When my eldest daughter was five and her brother three, we were walking home from a friend's house with a huge gymnastics ball. Each one wanted to play with it on the way home. "Gee," I said. "Two kids and one ball. That's a tough problem. But I know you two can come up with a solution." For a minute, there was silence and then my daughter said, "I know. Let's play 'go-in-front, go-in-front,'" and then she explained the game she had just made up that kept us all moving forward. We got home without a fight and the game has become part of the family repertoire.



By Batsheva Mink and David Brauner

# Planting perfect potatoes

For many of us a happy Hanukka means mouth-watering latkes. But do we think about where those wonderful fried potatoes that we so adore come from, or how they are grown?

Cultivation of the common potato first began in the high Andes of South America. Like maize (corn), the potato was a staple starchy food of the native Inca peoples. Indeed, the potato, which could be grown at altitudes above the "Indian corn line," was the leading crop of the huge Inca empire. Fresh from their conquest of Peru, the conquistadors introduced the potato into Spain in the 16th century. In quick succession this valuable new introduction reached France, England and Ireland.

However, the potato was viewed with suspicion because it belongs to the poisonous nightshade family (*Solanum*). In France, for example, it was thought to bring on leprosy, and the *pomme de terre* was only accepted as an edible crop at the end of the 18th century, when Antoine-Augustin Parmentier proved its food value during a wheat crop failure. Thereafter, Parmentier's name was connected with many potato dishes, and Louis XVI ate potatoes with every meal.

The potato, being an underground tuber, was unaffected by the ravages of war. For this reason, the strife-ridden Irish nation initially embraced the new vegetable and soon became entirely dependent on it. According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, by the end of the 18th century, "a typical Irish peasant family consumed an average of more than 3.5 kg. (approx. 8 lbs.) of potatoes per person per day." (See box.)

Capt. James Cook carried the potato to the Pacific islands and taught the Maori of New Zealand to grow it in 1773. Europeans introduced potatoes into North America where they had never before been known among the native peoples.

The success of the potato stems from three important virtues. First, it is an easy crop to grow, and grows more or less successfully in

a wide range of soils and temperatures. The vegetable that originated around Tlaxcala, the world's highest lake at 3,812 m. above sea level, now happily grows in the Jordan Valley near the Dead Sea, the world's lowest body of water at 397 m. below sea level.

Second, potatoes produce more actual food per dunam than almost any other crop. And third, although the tuber contains about 75 percent water, it provides 3.5 times the carbohydrate and 2.5 times the protein as an equivalent wheat crop.

As a food, spuds need no processing other than cooking, and the cooking is as simple as boiling water. They are palatable, digestible and nutritious. In industry, potatoes are a source of starch and alcohol.

But the potato is not without its disadvantages. The crop is particularly susceptible to a wide range of diseases (blights) and insect pests, and it can suffer from late frosts. If grown for too many years on the same ground, it will contaminate the earth with soil-borne diseases so that the soil eventually becomes unsuitable for potato-growing for several years. And the potato cannot be stored from one year to the next as wheat can.

With all these hazards, you may be wondering whether it is worth trying to grow your own potatoes. But if you consider the high price of potatoes in supermarkets here, and how delectable they are to eat, well, then, how can you resist the temptation to grow your own?

Make sure your potatoes have "chitted," in other words, sprouted, before planting. Chitting means encouraging the "seed," that is the whole potato tuber, to break dormancy and begin growth while still in storage. What this means is that strong, green shoots begin to emerge from the "eyes" which are, in fact, buds. Sprouting gets the plant off to a flying start. It also allows the gardener to check the growing qualities of his sprouts and not plant those that sprout poorly or fail to sprout at all. Also, sprouting indicates the

size and number of potatoes your garden will produce. Potatoes with a large number of shoots (eyes) will send up a correspondingly large number of stems that eventually result in more potatoes.

To sprout potatoes, place them close together in a box, pointed end up. Place the box in a cool, dry, well-lit position. Under these conditions, the tubers shouldn't rot, and plump, green sprouts should grow from the eyes in about four weeks. A cool-climate plant by nature, potatoes can be planted any time during the year when the nights are cool and dewy. Avoid planting potatoes during the very hottest months of summer, but remember that they enjoy full sun.

Prepare the soil by digging at least 30 cm. deep. Make sure it is as clod-free as possible, because clods create air pockets which prevent delicate roots and stolons (underground stems) from coming in contact with the soil.

Potatoes are "heavy feeders" so add plenty of compost as you dig, and give the seedbed a generous dressing of complete fertilizer, preferably high in potash.

Dig trenches about 12 cm. deep, spaced at least 34 cm. apart. Plant the potatoes in trenches, sprouted end up, at about 20-30 cm. apart, and cover them with soil. Build up the soil over the trenches leaving small ridges to make rows. Young shoots should begin to emerge from the ground after the second week if they have been watered a few times during that time. In winter, if there is any danger of frost in your area, bring a little more soil over the ridges, which in effect means deepening the furrows between the ridges (rows). Remove any weeds that may appear. When the "tops" are about 20 cm. high it is time for the first "earthing up," drawing up more soil from the furrows onto the ridge. This gardening technique has a triple action: (1) It keeps the newly forming potatoes from light, which turns them green (green tubers should not be eaten because they contain solanine, a

poison); and (3) it helps support the long-growing shoots above ground. For early new potatoes in spring it is sufficient to earth up once or twice.

In a good winter with plenty of rain, there is no need to water. Only if we have dry spells between rainfalls is there a need to water potatoes. The secret is not to let the plants dry out, to keep them growing. The more they photosynthesize through their tops, the bigger your underground crop will be. If planted in fall, potatoes should be ready for harvest from April onwards.

To harvest, carefully dig under the plants with a fork. Try not to leave any potatoes behind when you are lifting the crop. You can harvest spuds on a daily basis, as you need them. After having harvested the whole crop, the ground can be turned over and used to raise fast-growing vegetables like lettuce, carrots, spring onions, radish or spinach.

NOTE: The potato berry (a green to purple fruit from the flowers) is poisonous, so be sure to warn children not to pick and eat them.

Your gardening questions and comments are welcome. Contact Batsheva Mink, P.O.B. 3943, Jerusalem 91039, or David Brauner, e-mail: [morrir@ashur.cc.biu.ac.il](mailto:morrir@ashur.cc.biu.ac.il)

## TIP OF THE WEEK

If you do not have time to prepare the ground, but want to give your potatoes a head start, you can plant them first in pots. After they have sprouted, plant one potato per 8 cm. pot in a fresh potting mix. Place the pots in a warm, sunny position and water as needed. When you are ready to transplant your potatoes to the garden, knock out the whole plant from its pot, and plant as directed above.

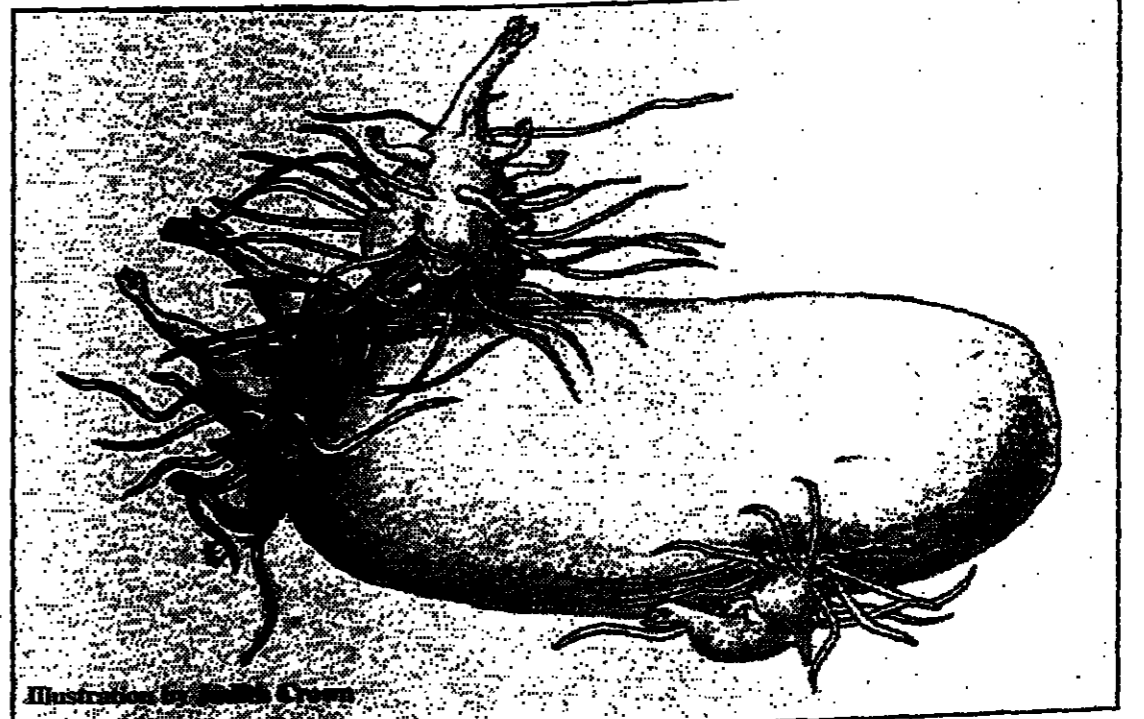


Illustration by Shoshana Cohen

## The fungus that nearly killed off a nation

**Baxy on the griddle, Baxy in the pan.**  
If you don't eat Baxy you'll never get a man.

Traditional Irish rhyme: The impact of the potato on Europe is unique. Its introduction changed the eating habits and history of an entire continent. And nowhere more so than in Ireland.

As a direct result of the importation of the potato into Ireland, the population of the island grew from 1.5 million to 9 million, an increase of 600 percent, between 1760 and 1840.

At the time, the potato as the staple food supplied 80 percent of all calories consumed in Ireland. The "Irish potato" was eaten and drunk in every possible form. Potato dishes had wonderfully quaint names like *bony bread*, *colcannon*, *champ* and *fadge*.

But for all its blessings, the potato became a cruel curse that resulted in the tragedy known as the Great Famine. When the potato crop began to fail in 1845, it seemed no worse than previous failures between 1724 and 1799, in which there were 15 famines. But in the two years of 1739-41, around a third of Ireland's population died of starvation.

The 1845 disaster was characterized by a speed previously unknown. A man passed through a certain district and all looked well. On his return a week later, the whole parish was stricken - as if by a frost - and all the fields were black with foliage devastated by the new blight.

Another 1-1.5 million migrated to America. By World War I around 5.5 million Irish people had either left or expired. In terms of its population, Ireland has never recovered from the Great Potato Famine.

The lethal killer of potatoes in the 1845 famine was a fungus identified as

*Phytophthora infestans*. In warm, damp, misty conditions, the blight can spread to a whole field within a week; by the second week the land is black and stinking.

The disease was first recognized in the US in 1843, and took two years to cross the Atlantic. In Europe, the fungus resurfaced first on the Isle of Wight, off the coast of southern England, and spread from there. It reached Ireland within one month.

The tubers, even if they appeared to be sound when harvested, would go rotten within a month. The blight and subsequent famine spread nationwide and, less well known throughout Europe, put an immense strain on the grain (wheat) crop, which nearly tripled in price.

The people of Ireland believed that God had forsaken them. Within the next five years some one million men, women and children were estimated to have died of starvation and disease.

Modern researchers believe the blight may have arrived on a potato peeling thrown overboard from an American ship passing through the English Channel. A cure for the blight was not found until the 1920s.

-B.M. & D.B.

## Heads 'N' Tails



Don't be surprised if a good watch-dog does not greet your visitors warmly. (Lisa Pleskow)

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## Are you compETible?

Many readers have written in lately to complain that they are disappointed in their pets. After investigating some of these complaints, and visiting several homes, I have discovered that, for the most part, the problem is really not the pet. The problem is the choice of pet.

Here I must be somewhat didactic. The people who have complained are not stupid. They would never have bought a car, a computer or even a food processor without asking some basic questions such as: What do I want? What do I need? How much can the product give me? How much does it cost? How will it fit my lifestyle?

These are very basic questions, but it appears that many people ignore them when they decide to buy or adopt a pet. People who should probably have a dog take a cat, and people who should have a cat take a dog. One animal-oriented couple actually bought an iguana for several hundred dollars for a nine-year-old child!

The point I want to stress is that loving or appreciating animals is simply not enough. If you want to assume the care and development of an animal, you have to get acquainted with the animal and make a real effort. You have to analyze the conditions in which you live, assess the facilities you are able to provide, and acquire a lot of information about the animal you want to include in your life.

We have had cases of people who, for example, vaguely wanted a "watch dog" but were appalled when the dog they chose didn't let Aunt Sophie, whom it had never seen, enter the garden. We also have those who had wanted a so-called watch dog and found that since they chose the wrong dog or perhaps the wrong breed, the ani-



An iguana is not the ideal gift for a nine-year-old child. (AP)

mal loved everyone but ruthlessly chased away other dogs. All this is part and parcel of a fundamental misunderstanding.

The dogs are, true to their own genetic make-up, just doing the job for which they have been bred over the centuries. Cats are also true to the nature of their species. As are the monkeys, hamsters, turtles and the other species that are kept as pets. So the real problem is not in the pet itself but in the forced connection between the animal and its human companion.

Until people begin to take the matter of acquiring a pet at least as seriously as buying a food processor or a new computer, there will only be more of these misunderstandings.

You wouldn't purchase a car without asking some basic questions, so why buy a monkey on a whim?

(Leora Cheskin)

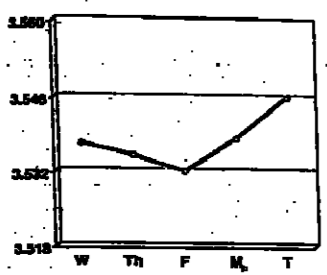


Handwritten text in Hebrew: "היא לא יודעת..."

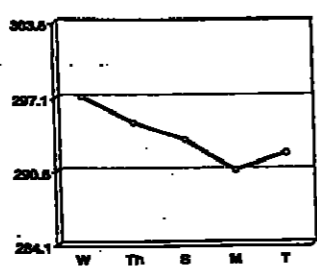
## MARKETS

in brief

DOLLAR / SHEKEL

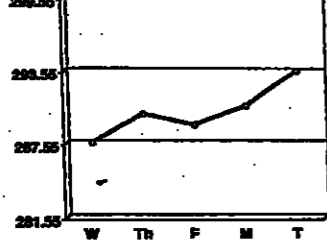


MAOF INDEX



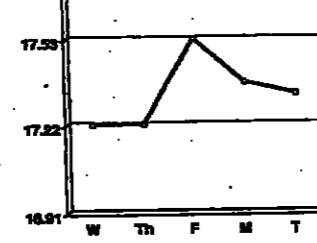
GOLD

\$ per ounce

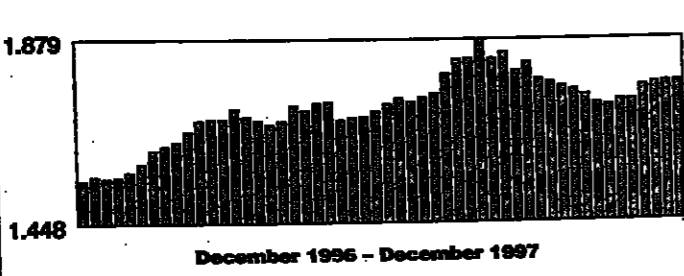


OIL

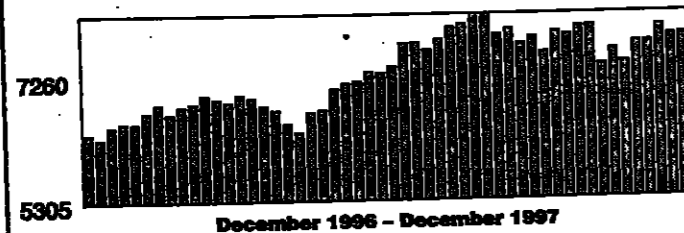
\$ per barrel of Brent crude



DOLLAR / DEUTSCHEMARK



DOW JONES INDUST. AVG.



Bezeq files appeal at Antitrust Authority

Bezeq International yesterday presented a court appeal against the ruling by the Antitrust Authority director general, who said the company "misled" the public in its advertising campaign for overseas dialling.

Company director Ori Yosev said the commission reached its conclusion based on partial quotes.

The appeal included the legal opinions of senior professors who support Bezeq International's claims.

Judy Siegel

Perio Products receives FDA approval

Perio Products of Jerusalem yesterday announced that the US Food and Drug Administration granted marketing approval for PerioChip, a treatment for periodontitis, a leading cause of tooth loss in adults.

PerioChip is a biodegradable polymer chip that can fit into pockets in the gums. The PerioChip will be marketed in the US by Astra USA, an American supplier of dental anesthetic.

Jennifer Friedlin

## Gov't cancels further cut in investment aid for '98

By JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

The Knesset Finance Committee yesterday voted to continue offering investment aid grants of 24 percent in 1998 for enterprises that invest in Priority Area A, rather than lowering the level to 20%.

Grants to Priority Area B will be lowered from 12% to 10%. Last year, the government said it would reduce Area B grants to 8% as of January 1, 1998.

"The considerations were purely economic," an economic adviser to Industry and Trade Minister Eitan Shinar said yesterday. "Given the current level of unemployment, we decided the current level had to be maintained."

The committee also agreed to reduce Priority Area A grants to 22% in 1999 and to 20% in 2000.

The debate over the level of investment aid grants, which were lowered this year from 34% to 24%, resurfaced recently after factories closed nationwide and workers in Ofakim, the country's weakest development town, took to the streets in an effort to draw attention to their worsening economic plight.

Supporters of the grants say economic incentives are instrumental in bringing companies, and jobs, to the periphery.

"Without the grants, there wouldn't be industry in the periphery at all," said MK Pini Badash (Izomet), who had called for the grants to be raised to 28%.

But some experts dispute the grants' economic efficacy.

Researchers at the Bank of Israel, the Central Bureau of Statistics and the University of Toronto recently collaborated on a study that shows the damaging effect grant subsidies can have on the economy.

"The Law of Encouragement of Capital Investments caused investors to establish capital-intensive plants in development areas that were profitable to the investor but not necessarily to the economy," said the study, entitled "The Effects of Capital Subsidization on Israeli Industry."

Some experts also say the grants direct too much money to

certain projects, while ignoring others. Many people criticized the previous government for agreeing to allocate a \$600m. grant to Intel for its \$1.6 billion Kiryat Gat plant. At the time of the allocation, investments in the periphery received grants of 38%.

The decision to leave the investment grants for Priority Area A at 24% next year represents a compromise agreement.

Last week, Former finance minister Avraham Shohat, the current Labor faction leader in the KFC, said he would lead the battle to raise the grant level to 28%.

The investment grant budget for 1997 totalled NIS 1.59 billion. In 1998, NIS 1.4b. will be allocated for investment grants.

## Asian crisis takes toll on Tadiran

By JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

Tadiran Telecommunications of Petah Tikva yesterday said it expects fourth-quarter earnings and net income to be lower than previously expected due to the crisis in the Asian markets.

Based upon orders received by the company and their scheduled delivery dates, sales to S. Korea in the fourth quarter were expected to be relatively high. However, as a result of the regional economic situation, this market now faces difficulties in completing transactions on schedule. Revenues will amount to approximately \$90 million, the company said.

Following the announcement, Tadiran Telecommunications' Nasdaq-traded shares fell 27% to \$14 in yesterday's trading. Parent company Tadiran Ltd.'s Tel Aviv traded shares fell 7.75% yesterday.

To offset the damage, Tadiran issued a statement saying it estimates net income for the fourth quarter of 1997 to be higher than the corresponding period last year. Tadiran Ltd. is Israel's largest electronics company.

## Dead Sea Works chairman steps down

By DAN GERSTENFELD

Uri Ben-Noon will leave his post as a member of the management of Israel Chemicals and as chairman of its subsidiary Dead Sea Works, the company said yesterday.

In a statement to the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, Israel Chemicals said that Ben-Noon will leave the company at the end of the month.

Ben-Noon will be replaced by Igal Diamant, chief executive of Israel Chemicals. Diamant is also the son-in-law of the late Shaul Eisenberg, who took control of the chemical manufacturer through the Israel Corp.

In the past there had been rumors that Diamant and Eisenberg's son, Erwin, wanted to oust Ben-Noon, but the plan fell through when Shaul Eisenberg died in March.

Earlier this year, Ben-Noon, who had served also as CEO of Dead Sea Works, was replaced in that position by Shaul Ben-Ze'ev, in what was considered to be the first step towards his full resignation.

The tension between Ben-Noon and the management of Israel Chemicals rose last month, after the company's board of directors decided to appoint a special committee to check investments in the magnesium project.



Uri Ben-Noon

Last May, Israel Chemicals and the German automaker, Volkswagen laid the cornerstone for a \$750 million magnesium plant in Sdom. Several directors suspected that Ben-Noon didn't give the board all the information about the project and its costs, which were much higher than the original forecasts.

A source close to the company said that Israel Chemicals ignored Ben-Noon's demand for options worth NIS 8 million. In a statement, the company said his compensation package will be decided upon and brought to the approval of the board of directors.

Ben-Noon refused to comment.

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THE BUSINESS SCENE

By GRILL FAV CASIMAN



Science Minister Michael Eitan's (right) presentation with computers is no secret. During the course of a visit to the Hebrew University's business school, it took no persuasion on the part of Dr. David Wozniak to get Eitan to surf through a virtual marketplace and inspect the products of his choice from all sides. Eitan was so fascinated by the experience that he had not had other appointments, he might well have stayed at the university all day.

The Israel Center for Social and Economic Progress, an independent Jerusalem-based think tank last week hosted U.S. Undersecretary of State for Economic Affairs Stuart Eizenstat. During his two-day stay in Israel, Eizenstat spoke to politicians, Bank of Israel officials and academicians, encouraging them to continue implementing economic reforms and furthering Israel's economic ties with the Palestinian Authority. Eizenstat, who was here as part of the Joint Economic Development group, said Israel should increase the free flow of goods and people with the PA and reduce restrictions on cross-border commercial traffic.

Israeli business executives will be able to influence policy decisions of the international Chamber of Commerce as a result of a letter put forward by Moshe Sander, president of the Israel National Committee of the ICC. At the recent meeting of the ICC executive board in Paris, Sander pre-

posed that the Israel National Committee be given the opportunity to consult with leading representatives of Israel's business community on a broad range of subjects and thereby influence positions taken by the ICC in its relations to and within international organizations.

Ulla Frenkel is the new Chairman of the Israel National Committee. Her previous positions have included adviser to the construction and housing minister, spokesperson for the Israeli delegation to the UN, and the IDF spokesman's representative in Jerusalem and Lebanon.

Paul Sander, general manager of the Israel Center for Social and Economic Progress, was named winner of the 1997 Moshe Barnea Prize for Social Management. The prize, established in memory of Moshe Barnea, a long-time manager of the Israel Hotel Association, is awarded to the person believed to have had the greatest influence on Israel's hotel industry through innovations in service, operations, marketing and management. Other considerations include professional ethics, high standards of conduct and personal involvement in the hotel industry.

DHL Worldwide Express, one of the world's largest courier firms, is expanding its operations here. Roger Connell, the new managing director of DHL Israel and former managing director of DHL Poland, is confident that in 1998, DHL's share in the international market will rise 20%.

By NEIL COHEN

As the secular year winds down, tax season is rolling in and many people are seeking advice from accountants and tax advisers. Although I am not a tax professional, and anyone considering taking serious action should consult with a tax specialist, there is one thing everyone should know: Regulations regarding pension contributions, whether made through pension funds, provident funds (kupo gemes) or managers' insurance (binah menaholim), are quite tax-efficient, as they are designed to encourage long-term savings.

And, although it is not the norm, there is no reason why you should not start a pension fund or managers' insurance program just before the end of the year, with a single payment. Contributions to pension funds and managers' insurance plans are typically made through the course of the year, but individual pension schemes do exist. Salaried employees of larger organizations tend to receive pension funds while people on personal contracts, non-union employees and the self-employed tend to have managers' insurance. Provident funds tend to go after the self-employed, since all one has to do to contribute to one's fund is to form and send in one's check, or alternatively go to the nearest bank, fill in the form and pay into the fund.

Pension plans and managers' insurance annuity plans attract a

slightly higher tax credit than managers' insurance lump-sum plans and provident funds. Managers' insurance is also a more flexible product, which many see as a big plus. What this means is that you can choose how the money you and your employer (possibly yourself, if you own your company) contribute is allocated, choosing between savings, life insurance and disability insurance.

The drawback of this so-called flexibility is that you are paying through the nose for it, and unless you can negotiate a better deal with your insurance agent/insurance company (which you should be able to) it will work out cheaper to direct your entire contribution to savings, and buy life and disability insurance separately. Life insurance, by the way, should get a lot more competitive and a good deal cheaper when Direct Insurance enters the market, something that is expected shortly. Insurance agents who sell managers' insurance also claim that because the insurance companies compete in the open market, they better manage their money. Unfortunately, the investment performance records of the various insurance company fund managers are not publicly available.

Based on my short participation in a managers' insurance scheme (I grant that a sample of one is not representative) the management and performance is no better or worse than that of the provident funds, i.e. pretty ordinary. The fees (and again, this applies to the provident sector as well as to man-

PERSONAL FINANCE

agers insurance) were also way out of line with what one would expect to pay in a developed and competitive financial market, like the US or the UK. The final drawback of managers insurance, like much pre-competition insurance in this country (remember the cartel?) is that you do not know how much of your money is being invested and how much is going to pay your agent's commission. Like most other things this should be negotiable if you press hard enough and your agent wants the business badly enough.

Employees who are also controlling shareholders in their companies share somewhat different rules on the amount they can contribute and should seek advice. A lot of uncertainty currently surrounds the pension funds. Both new and old members are guaranteed certain levels of return, though veteran members are guaranteed higher returns. And pension funds face substantial actuarial deficits: They're not short of the cash right now but based on projections of the variables that determine their financial situation, they soon will be.

The previous government agreed to underwrite the funds' deficits. But the present government, realizing that the cost will

be high, has tried to renegotiate the deal with the pension funds and with the Histadrut, the umbrella organization. The government's attempts to restructure caused the recent week-long general strike. The government backed down, but it seems likely that at some point it will try to rework the deal.

I am not suggesting for one moment that any Israeli government would let a pension fund fail. However, the guaranteed returns being trumpeted by pension funds in radio and TV commercials may prove to be illusory. Be well aware that this is the time of year when everyone is spending their advertising shekels to get a piece of the savings pie as well as the management fees and commissions that come with it.

Some banks are offering free gifts, loans and rebates to get you to put money in their provident funds. Do not be tempted by the gimmicks. The bank will recoup the money within a few months and you may go on paying the price for years. Just remember that you pay about 1% a year to the bank for managing your provident fund, every year for 15 years. So a 1% rebate, or a free gift worth a few hundred shekels (which is bought at wholesale prices from a manufacturer anxious to shift some aging inventory) isn't worth much.

Taking a loan from a bank to pay into a pension fund is a less clear cut proposition. If you are temporarily short of cash and will be able to repay the loan soon, the tax benefit gained by putting the

money into a fund, may comfortably outweigh the cost of the interest on the loan. But remember, the provident funds can go down in value as well as up and they are extremely non-liquid. And you only get the tax benefit once. So don't assume you're going to be able to use the provident fund to repay the loan.

Now that I've trashed all three forms of investment, which one is the lesser of the evils? Provident funds (they publish transparent vehicles (they publish monthly statistics) and after fifteen years you can withdraw your funds and invest in a better-managed vehicle.

Some of the independent, non-bank funds seem to be delivering reasonable performance, while a couple of the banks (FIBI and UMB) have decent track records in managing some of their funds. For a smaller saver this would be my choice. For someone earning big money, a carefully chosen, aggressively negotiated manager's insurance plan is probably best. You're not facing a faceless fund manager and there are certain side benefits and flexibilities not offered by provident funds.

And pension funds? Maybe it's a psychological aversion to anything financial associated with the Histadrut, but my inclination is to stay away.

But, if the markets do badly and the government sticks to the guarantees they could deliver superior performance. Somehow, though, I doubt it.

E-mail providers look for ways to cut costs

By ANDREW BROOKS

IXC Corp. Chief Executive Tom Evinlin is an e-mail provider's worst nightmare. He sends some 1,500 messages a month and pays \$19.95 for his Internet service, or slightly more than a penny a message whether it's one page or a hundred. Evinlin takes care of most of his communications needs for less than \$1 a day.

That's about to change. Internet service providers are getting wise to the financial drain created by customers' explosive use of e-mail and aiming to recoup some of their costs. AT&T Corp. is adding more expensive vanity addresses, while Excite Inc. and others are looking to advertising, moves likely to send plain old e-mail the way of the rotary telephone. "E-mail will change dramatically," said Chris Landes, an analyst at market research company Tele-Choice Inc. "Even basic e-mail won't just be sent and received."

The largest ISPs like AT&T, America Online Inc., MCI Communications Corp. and WorldCom Inc.'s UUNET Technologies are seeing e-mail traffic double every six

months, said the Yankee Group, a Boston research company. What's more, the size of each message is mushrooming because users can attach documents.

Those increases will lead ISPs to spend \$68.6 billion a year on their e-mail systems by 2000, up from \$25.3 billion in 1994, according to the Electronic Messaging Association of Arlington, Virginia.

America Online, for example, added 14 e-mail servers to its network so far this year, bringing its total to 20. AOL, which handles more than 21 million e-mail messages a day, completed a \$350 million expansion of its network in the quarter that ended June 30, after a jump in subscribers caused big delays.

AT&T, which transmits about a million messages each day, tripled its number of servers to six in the year.

"You can have millions and millions of users, but if the maximum you can make is \$19.95 a month, your revenue is capped," said Mark Levitt, an analyst at International Data Corp.

For some ISPs, the best way to recoup costs is to ask customers to pay more. AT&T and others are developing services

that will let them charge customers a few dollars extra each month. These include shared mail folders, return receipt notification, better virus protection, priority delivery and other guarantees.

Enhanced features aren't a new idea. The Baby Bell local phone companies learned years ago they could boost their revenue by offering call waiting, caller identification and voice mail. These services don't cost much to provide and have high profit margins. Bell South Corp., for example, said sales of such services rose 22% in third quarter to \$348M, boosting its profit from operations to \$705M.

AT&T's WorldNet Internet service unveiled a new feature for its business customers last week that lets them set up vanity e-mail addresses. "There's a whole number of services that if they were available, we'd probably use," he said.

Other e-mail providers see the messages as a way to generate advertising dollars and offer it for free. These Internet-based services are catching on with consumers, who want their e-mail wherever they go rather than being linked into one service.

Closely held Hotmail Corp. and Web-search companies such as Excite, Lycos Inc. and Yahoo! Inc. are using the mail services to lure more Internet users to their sites, making them more attractive to advertisers.

Since its beginning in July 1996, Hotmail has opened more than 8 million e-mail accounts. While users get the service for free, they do have to give something in return: personal information about their interests, age, income and employment. Hotmail uses that information to help advertisers personalize their pitches.

"The thinking is to show content providers how many eyeballs I have looking at me," said Joe Bartlett, a Yankee Group analyst. For Excite, e-mail is another way to guarantee that users will visit its home page over that of its rivals. "It's the driving force for repeat business," said Greg Klambauer, an Excite spokesman.

To keep those customers coming Excite, which doesn't have a network and pays another company to carry its traffic, also offers enhanced features, such as vanity addresses. Excite has about 1.3 million e-mail accounts. (Bloomberg Business News)

MUTUAL FUNDS

Table with columns: Fund's name, unit cost, redemption price, monthly yield, 1997 yield, and NIS assets. Includes sections for FLEXIBLE, SHARES, and STATE BONDS.

Table with columns: Fund's name, unit cost, redemption price, monthly yield, 1997 yield, and NIS assets. Includes sections for FLEXIBLE, COMPANY BONDS, and STATE BONDS.

Table with columns: Fund's name, unit cost, redemption price, monthly yield, 1997 yield, and NIS assets. Includes sections for FOREIGN CURRENCY and MIXED.

Table with columns: Fund's name, unit cost, redemption price, monthly yield, 1997 yield, and NIS assets. Includes sections for FOREIGN CURRENCY and MIXED.

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# Japanese stocks hit four-year low

LAST	CHANGE
ThreeCom	33.4375
Time Warner	41.125
Time Mirror	22.5625
Tristar	34.125
Traveler	31.625
Traveler Corp	31.625
Traveler Group	31.625
Traveler Int'l	31.625
Traveler Japan	31.625
Traveler Korea	31.625
Traveler Taiwan	31.625
Traveler Thailand	31.625
Traveler USA	31.625
Traveler UK	31.625
Traveler Europe	31.625
Traveler Africa	31.625
Traveler Asia	31.625
Traveler Oceania	31.625
Traveler Middle East	31.625
Traveler Latin America	31.625
Traveler Caribbean	31.625
Traveler South America	31.625
Traveler Central America	31.625
Traveler North America	31.625
Traveler South America	31.625
Traveler Central America	31.625
Traveler North America	31.625

## FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES

LAST	CHANGE
Saudi (Baker) (1)	2.7668
U.S. Dollar (1)	3.538
British Pound (1)	5.8905
Japanese Yen (100)	1.3665
Swiss Franc (1)	0.5944
Japanese Yen (100)	2.717
Swiss Franc (1)	1.4029
Canadian Dollar (1)	2.4637
Italian Lira (1000)	2.0265
Jordanian Dinar (1)	5.0034

## NEW YORK MARKET INDEXES

LAST	CHANGE
DJ Industrials	7891.77
DJ Transport	3125.28
DJ Utility	268.43
DJ Comp	2529.9
DJ Energy	499.46
DJ Health	448.29
DJ Tech	494.85
DJ S&P 100	442.25
S&P 500 Index	938.12

## OTHER MARKET INDEXES

LAST	CHANGE
FTSE 100	5049.8
Nikkei	14799.4
DAX	4052.42
Hang Seng	10368.1
Hong Kong	10368.1
India	192.82
Japan	2684.13
Korea	4052.42
Malaysia	815.59
Singapore	2622.1
Taiwan	2358.9
Thailand	1004.72

## DOLLAR CROSS-RATES (US)

LAST	CHANGE
British	1.6675
Canadian	1.6675
French	1.6675
German	1.6675
Italian	1.6675
Japanese	1.6675
Swiss	1.6675
Thai	1.6675
Yen	1.6675

## US COMMODITIES

LAST	CHANGE
Cocoa (Mar)	1650
Coffee (Mar)	1624
Wheat (Mar)	326.75
Soybean (Mar)	861.25
Sugar (Mar)	12.21
Orange Juice (Mar)	38.1
Bonds	120.28
S&P 500	945

## LONDON COMMODITIES

LAST	CHANGE
Cocoa (Mar)	1650
Coffee (Mar)	1624
Wheat (Mar)	326.75
Soybean (Mar)	861.25
Sugar (Mar)	12.21
Orange Juice (Mar)	38.1
Bonds	120.28
S&P 500	945

## SPOT MARKET METALS (US)

LAST	CHANGE
Silver	6.25
Gold	265.5
Copper	1.75
Aluminum	1.15
Zinc	1.15
Nickel	1.15
Lead	1.15
Iron	1.15
Steel	1.15

## NEW YORK METAL FUTURES

LAST	CHANGE
Gold (Feb)	265.5
Silver (Mar)	6.24
Platinum (Mar)	38.1
Palladium (Mar)	185.15
High-grade copper (Mar)	1.75

## LONDON METAL FIXES

LAST	CHANGE
Gold AM	262.2
Gold PM	262.2
Silver	6.25
Platinum	185.15
Palladium	185.15

## Tel Aviv

Israeli stocks rose as investors were encouraged by rises on Wall Street yesterday, which followed sharp declines in East Asia earlier in the day.

Analysis said the gains were partly checked after Tadiran Telecommunications Ltd., a subsidiary of Tadiran Ltd. said weakness in Asian markets will push fourth-quarter net income and revenue "below plan." Tadiran Ltd. shares sank 7.75 percent to NIS 130.14.

The Maof Index of 25 stocks increased 0.54% to 292.1. The Mishman Index of 100 most-traded stocks gained 0.51% to 279.65.

The Tel Aviv Continuous Trading Index rose 0.5% to 93.65.

"There were rises in the US, contrary to" expectations, said Asaf Yadi, a trader at Iliot Batucha Investment. "That gives the market some air" in Tel Aviv, he said.

Mark Meiras, managing director at Pacific Mediterranean Investments, said that "all the gains" across the exchange "were muted because of Tadiran."

Across the exchange, NIS 210 million of shares were traded. About five shares dropped for every three that rose.

Clal Trading Ltd. soared 21.2% to 14.04. Clal Israel Ltd., which rose 0.5% to 1.01, said it offered to buy the shares of Clal Trading it doesn't already own for NIS

## Europe

UK stocks gained, led by Lloyds TSB Group Plc, boosted by a series of analyst reports and gains in Hong Kong.

Rentokil Initial Plc was one of the largest percentage gainers after BZW "highlighted" the company in its 1998 stock outlook. A steeper-than-expected rise in US factory orders for durable goods sparked concern interest rates may be headed higher, though it failed to depress stocks.

The numbers were "way above expectations - but all the strength was in aircraft," said Ian Shepherdson, chief economist at HSBC Markets Inc. "This was actually a bit weaker than we expected."

The benchmark FTSE 100 Index rose 31.6 points, or 0.63%, to 5049.8 after Hong Kong's Hang Seng index gained 1.92%. Shares in Rentokil climbed 11.5p to 260.

BZW strategists also "highlighted" Vodafone Group Plc, up 12.5p to 450.5. Northern Rock Plc, up 13.5p to 578, and Granada Group Plc, up 19p to 925. No other information was immediately available.

The strategists said they saw the FTSE 100 reaching 6000 by the end of 1998, lifted by expectations of falling interest rates.

## STOCKS

Maof 292.1 ▲ 0.54%

Dow Jones 7691 ▼ 1.6%

FTSE 5049.8 ▲ 0.63%

Nikkei 14,799 ▼ 3.37%

Vodafone also benefited from speculation it may be the target of a takeover bid. "Vodafone has been a perennial source of rumors," said James Dewhurst, an equities salesman at Charterhouse, Tully Securities Ltd. Vodafone's industry rival Orange Plc also rallied, gaining 14p to 264.

Japanese stocks tumbled, with the benchmark Nikkei 225 index slipping below 15,000 for the first time since July 1995, as investors worried that last week's failure of a major food trader signals continued weakness in the financial system.

The Nikkei 225 fell 515.49 points, or 3.37%, to 14,799.40. That's the lowest it has closed since July 4, 1995, and slightly above a post-1980s low of 14,485.41. The Topix index of all shares on the first section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange declined 37.58 points, or 3.2 percent, to 1130.00.

## Wall Street

NEW YORK (AP) - Stocks fell sharply near yesterday's close after holding steady for most of the session following another panicky selloff in Southeast Asia.

The Dow Jones industrial average sank 127.54 points - or 1.63 percent - to 7,691.77, with most of the damage coming in the last hour of trading. Broad-market indicators were also hit hard late in the session as investors opted for a defensive stance before the holidays.

The market had been only modestly lower for most of the day despite the latest aftershock from South Korea, where stocks plunged a record 7.5% amid news that Standard and Poor's had downgraded that country's credit rating.

US investors may have drawn some confidence from European markets, which shrugged off the turmoil in South Korea. But with Japanese financial markets closed for a holiday, it was unclear if Wall Street would wake up today to a steep decline in Tokyo.

## Asia

Japanese stocks tumbled, with the benchmark Nikkei 225 index slipping below 15,000 for the first time since July 1995, as investors worried that last week's failure of a major food trader signals continued weakness in the financial system.

The Nikkei 225 fell 515.49 points, or 3.37%, to 14,799.40. That's the lowest it has closed since July 4, 1995, and slightly above a post-1980s low of 14,485.41. The Topix index of all shares on the first section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange declined 37.58 points, or 3.2 percent, to 1130.00.

This is a situation when investors say - why don't we just get out of Japan, said Robert Sasaki, head of the quantitative strategy group at Jardine Fleming Securities (Asia) Ltd.

Banks led the decline as investors worried that more bankruptcies like Toshiba could add to the 28 trillion yen in bad loans already carried by Japanese lenders. (Bloomberg)

# South Korean won falls 13% on rating cut

The South Korean won tumbled to a record low against the US dollar after the two biggest international credit rating agencies lowered the country's foreign-currency debt ratings.

Moody's Investors Service downgraded Korean government and corporate debt Monday, and Standard & Poor's followed suit, downgrading seven Korean firms and three banks.

The downgrade triggered a surge in demand for dollars by banks and companies concerned the ratings drop would force foreign banks to curtail dollar-denominated loans to Korea. Korean firms increasingly need dollars to pay import bills and other dollar-denominated debts coming due as the year ends.

"The ratings downgrade is a decisive blow to Korea," said Lee Chang Ho, a trader at Korea Exchange Bank. "The downgrade makes it next to impossible for Korean banks to borrow overseas."

The won fell 12.68 percent to 1,964 won per dollar. The won is down 57% against the dollar this year and has fallen 28% against the US dollar in the last five days alone.

Meanwhile, the dollar fell against the mark, dragged lower with the British pound which fell on concern a strong pound is hurting British exports.

## CURRENCIES

Dollar 3.536 ▼ 0.06%

Basket 3.7966 ▲ 0.02%

Mark 1.9845 ▲ 0.12%

Sterling 5.8906 ▲ 0.06%

MMS: The pound fell after Britain's trade deficit widened in November, fueling concern the pound's strength this year is

crimping exports and could damage economic growth in the U.K. The dollar was little changed against the yen. The dollar fell to 1,770 marks from 1,781.00 late Monday. It was at 130.27 yen, little changed from 130.35 yen Monday.

Analysts see Korea's problems spilling over into Japan, one of its largest trading partners, and weighing on the yen in the days ahead. Japanese markets were closed yesterday for the Emperor's birthday.

"If the won is already at 1,957, what's to stop it breaking 2,000?" said Peter Chong, a currency trader at Westdeutsche Landesbank in Singapore. If that happens, "it would have a spill over to dollar-yen" and other Asian currencies, he said.

While the yen has fallen 12.7% against the dollar so far this year, it has risen on a trade-weighted basis because of the extreme weakness of other currencies in the region.

That means the yen has room to fall, said Ian Amstad, a senior economist at Bankers Trust International. A strong yen dents Japan's exports to the region by making them more expensive, and could hurt the country's chances of economic recovery.

Because of the weakness in the Japanese economy, interest rates aren't seen rising anytime soon from their record lows. Higher returns in the US make dollar-denominated deposits more attractive. (Bloomberg)

# Gold rises on increased demand

Precious metals

Gold rose for the third straight trading day yesterday on increased demand as traders bet prices would not fall much lower at a time of high seasonal consumption, and as confidence grew about the role of gold in the new European Central Bank. Traders who have sold gold short - sold metal they don't own in expectation prices would fall - are now buying heavily at prices close to recent near 18-year lows, analysts said.

Their activities come at a time when gold is in high seasonal demand as India, the world's largest consumer of the metal, gears up for its wedding season. Spot gold traded 65 cents higher at \$292.10 an ounce.

## Energy

Crude oil prices in London hovered at two-year lows as traders await the start of a third tranche of oil sales by Iraq that will boost global supplies by 1 percent. While Iraq's crude will add to oversupply expectations next year, brokers said a drop of 7 percent in Brent crude oil prices in the past three weeks has accounted for the extra Iraqi barrels in the market. Brokers bet prices wouldn't move much before the Christmas recess, adding that a drop in

## COMMODITIES

Gold \$293.45 ▲ 1.8%

Crude Oil \$17.35 ▲ 0.07%

CRB 231.91 ▲ 0.55%

## Others

Coffee rose. The US Department of Agriculture said Friday it has reduced its estimate of Brazilian coffee production in the current crop year to 26 million 60-kilogram bags from 28 million bags in June forecast. The new forecast foresees a decline from the 28 million bags produced in 1996-97. Brazil is the world's largest coffee producer. March coffee rose \$35 to \$1,665 a ton on Liffe.

## COMMODITIES

Cocoa fell amid continuing speculation that Salomon Smith Barney will sell cocoa as part of the restructuring of its Phibro commodities unit. Phibro, which Travelers Group Inc. acquired when it bought Salomon Inc. last month, will be overhauled to focus on a few commodities with the best growth prospects. US traders speculate there will be metals and energy. March cocoa recently traded down 11 pounds (\$13.32) to 1,038 pounds a ton on Liffe.

## US bonds rise after durable goods report

Nikko Securities International Inc. "We look at the non-aircraft results because it is more representative of the economy as a whole."

The benchmark 30-year bond rose 11/32, or \$3.44 per \$1,000 bond, to 103 22/32, cutting its yield 2 basis points to 5.86%, the lowest since October 1993. The yield on the two-year note fell 1 basis point to 5.67%.

## BONDS

US 30-year T-bill yield 5.86 ▼ 0.02

Earlier, the government reported US gross domestic product rose 3.1% in the third quarter, less than the 3.3% originally reported. The

## US 30-year T-bill yield

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## Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi Schroder

Wertheim weekly sales report, meantime, showed US retail sales for the week ended Dec. 20 fell 0.9% from the previous week. Investors are eyeing US reports for signs the economy is slowing, affected by dwindling demand from the Pacific Rim for US exports as that region's economies falter.

## stock markets around the world

"There's speculation that what's happening in Asia is affecting people's businesses," said Robert McGee, chief economist at Tokai Bank.

Slowing US manufacturing could help keep a lid on inflation and keep the Federal Reserve from raising interest rates anytime soon, investors said. That's good for bonds, too, because inflation erodes the value of their fixed payments and principal. At its final policy meeting of the year last week, the Fed left its target for overnight lending between banks at 5.5%. (Bloomberg)

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**ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS**

**Patiah (foreign currency deposit rates) (7.11.97)**

Currency (deposit for)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	5.000	5.000	5.250
Pound sterling (£100,000)	5.625	5.750	6.000
German mark (DM 200,000)	2.250	2.375	2.875
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	0.625	0.625	1.000

(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

**Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates\* (23.12.97)**

CHECKS AND TRANSFERS	BUY	SELL	BANKNOTES	BUY	SELL	Rep. Rates**
Currency basket	3.7634	3.8242	—	—	—	3.7966
U.S. dollar	3.5042	3.5648	3.44	3.82	—	3.5960
German mark	1.9745	2.0064	1.84	2.04	—	1.9906
Pound sterling	5.8204	5.9236	5.72	6.01	—	5.9869
French franc	0.5891	0.5887	0.57	0.61	—	0.5944
Japanese yen (100)	2.6917	2.7852	2.64	2.78	—	2.7174
Dutch florin	1.7505	1.7789	1.76	1.81	—	1.7853
Swiss franc	2.4439	2.4834	2.40	2.52	—	2.4629
Swedish krona	0.4510	0.4583	0.44	0.47	—	0.4641
Norwegian krone	0.4832	0.4810	0.47	0.50	—	0.4866
Danish krone	0.5181	0.5265	0.50	0.54	—	0.5222
Finnish mark	0.6518	0.6624	0.64	0.68	—	0.6566
Canadian dollar	2.4442	2.4837	2.40	2.52	—	2.4633
Australian dollar	2.2945	2.3316	2.25	2.37	—	2.3187
S. African rand	0.7211	0.7328	0.65	0.74	—	0.7267
Belgian franc (10)	0.9557	0.9712	0.93	0.99	—	0.9639
Austrian schilling (10)	2.6935	2.8488	2.75	2.89	—	2.8278
Italian lira (1000)	2.0105	2.0430	1.97	2.08	—	2.0265
Jordanian dinar	4.9446	5.0244	4.88	5.21	—	5.0034
Egyptian pound	1.0000	1.0800	1.00	1.08	—	1.0078
ECU	3.9029	3.9659	—	—	—	3.9333
Irish punt	5.0894	5.1715	5.00	5.25	—	5.1297
Spanish peseta (100)	2.3296	2.3672	2.28	2.41	—	2.3497

\*These rates vary according to bank. \*\*Bank of Israel.

SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

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# Australians sparkled in '97 until World Cup let-down

SYDNEY (Reuters) - Four miserable minutes on a balmy Melbourne night on November 29 washed away all of Australia's considerable sporting achievements in 1997.

Mick Doohan won his fourth consecutive world 500cc motorcycle championship, Patrick Rafter took the US Open tennis title and Australia's cricketers confirmed their place as the best test team in the world.

Indeed, it seemed there was an Australian involved in almost every sporting success, from the NBA to the even more unlikely slalom skiing.

But it was those four minutes that cast a shadow over everything else as Australia battled Iran for the 32nd and final place in the 1998 World Cup in France.

For most of the match Australia, coached by England's Terry Venables, showed they deserved a place at the world game's showpiece for the first time since 1974 and only the second time in history.

The Australians needed only a scoreless draw or a win to qualify after holding Iran to a 1-1 draw in Teheran the week before and they dominated the return match in front of over 80,000 raucous fans.

Australia led 2-0 with 13 minutes left and France was in sight until Iran pounced on two defensive errors to turn the match on its head, drawing 2-2 and qualifying on away goals.

Venables was later to describe it as the cruellest thing he had ever seen in soccer, worse still than England's loss to Germany on a penalty shoot-out in the semifinals of Euro 96.

It was a cruel way to end a year which saw motorcycleist Doohan lodge a legitimate claim for the title of international sportsman of 1997 for his peerless performances on the racing track.

Doohan broke Italian Giacomo Agostini's 25-year-old record of 11 wins in a season with his 12th victory - and 10th straight - at the Catalunya Grand Prix in September.

Rafter was perhaps the most refreshing new champion on the world sporting stage and returned home to a hero's welcome in



TOP NOTCH AUSSIE - Pat Rafter. (Reuters)

November after his US Open triumph a month earlier.

Rafter became the first Australian to win a grand slam since Pat Cash at Wimbledon in 1987 when he beat Britain's Greg Rusedski and finished the year ranked No. 2, the highest ranking held by an Australian since John Newcombe in 1974.

With about \$3 million in prize money to spend, Rafter also found plenty of time to let down his long hair. The 24-year-old admitted that he was still drunk when he played a "dead" Davis Cup match against the Czech Republic in April.

Rafter's apparent sin was quickly forgiven, his self-deprecating sense of humor setting him apart from the majority of production line professionals.

Australia's hardworking cricketers proved themselves to be the best Test side in the world

with a 3-2 Ashes defeat of England in August but they hardly had time to celebrate before two more series began at home in the southern hemisphere summer.

The defeat of England for the fifth straight time came after earlier series wins for Mark Taylor and his men over West Indies and South Africa.

Captain Taylor ended an 18-month stretch of poor batting form with a courageous century in the first Ashes Test but, with one series blurring into another, he was overlooked for Australia's annual limited overs home series.

Taylor will be back at work when Australia, who beat New Zealand 2-0 late in the year, take on South Africa from December 26 in the first Test of yet another new series.

More blood, sweat and tears were shed off the field than on it in rugby union as the Wallabies named a new coach midway through a disappointing season for the 1991 world champions.

Greg Smith was forced to resign after Australia started the season with wins over France and England but then lost all three Tests against New Zealand and split two with South Africa to finish bottom of the Tri-Nations series.

Rod Macqueen barely had time to warm his seat as Smith's successor before questions were being asked about his future. Australia finishing the season with a split series against Argentina, a tame draw against England and a win over Scotland.

Australians also popped up on less likely sporting stages, the gangling Luc Longley helping the Chicago Bulls celebrate their fifth NBA title in seven years with a 4-2 series win over Utah in June.

Even more unlikely was Zali Steggall's women's slalom win in Utah in November, the first time an Australian woman has won a World Cup race.

But for all the successes the year will be remembered for one spectacular failure on a singular night in Melbourne when soccer fans around the country wished that time had stood still - at least for four minutes.

# Top athletes honored

By HEATHER CHAIT

Israel's top sportsmen and women were honored last night in Jerusalem for their national and international achievements in 1997.

Fifty sportspeople were awarded trophies in the presence of Deputy Minister of Culture, Sport and Education, Moshe Peled, Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert and Director General of the Israel Olympic Committee, Efraim Zinger.

Taking center stage was windsurfer Amit Inbar who won the silver medal at the world championships in Perth, Australia, last week.

"This result was the best comeback I could ask for, especially after I took a year off after losing the trials for Atlanta," said Inbar, clearly enjoying the attention.

Besides Inbar, other sportspeople who also received a financial bonus were swimmers Eytan Orbach and Mickey Habiba, shooter Guy Stekel, taekwondoist Ella Madar and sailors Yoel Yoge and Anat Kolodny.

The subject of the day was the dwindling sports budget. While Peled restrained himself to admiring the achievements despite the limited budget, Olmert openly questioned the government's meager assistance to sport.

"You have to influence the government for more funds," he said addressing the athletes directly, adding that a substantially larger budget was needed if there is to be success at the Sydney 2000 Olympics.

# SPORTS

in brief

## England selectors' contracts extended

LONDON (Reuters) - England selectors David Graveney, Graham Gooch and Mike Gatting have had their contracts extended until beyond the 1999 World Cup by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB).

Chairman of selectors Graveney, and Gooch, whose current contracts were due to end in February 1999, have been re-appointed for a further six months.

Gatting, whose contract ran to next February, has been re-appointed for a further two years.

The decision announced yesterday was unanimously agreed at a meeting of the England management advisory committee at Lord's on Monday.

## Stoichkov going to Compostela, say papers

MADRID (Reuters) - Barcelona's Hristo Stoichkov could soon be on his way to Compostela, according to reports in several Spanish newspapers yesterday.

Compostela president Jose Maria Caneda has publicly said he wants to link the 31-year-old Bulgarian striker with his compatriot Lyuboslav Penev in a bid to get the goals that would lift Compostela out of relegation trouble.

The volazlie Stoichkov, the 1994 European player of the year, has had a difficult season at the Catalan club.

Louis van Gaal publicly castigated him in October for some training pitch pranks and he was not in the Dutch coach's plans for the initial part of the season.

He played in only one league match before he was injured in November and is still on the treatment table.

Stoichkov had said he wanted to stay at Barcelona, where in his seventh season he is still a big favourite with the fans, until the year 2000.

However, with his place in the Bulgarian World Cup squad in jeopardy, he is reported to be interested in the move.

## Moldovan signs \$6.7m contract with Coventry

BUCHAREST (Reuters) - Romanian international striker Viorel Moldovan has signed a four-and-a-half year contract worth \$6.7 million with English premier league Coventry City, his agent Ioan Becali said yesterday.

Becali said Moldovan, who plays for Swiss side Grasshoppers, would join Coventry on January 2.

He has scored eight goals in 20 internationals.

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Jerusalem Area

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# Grounds for complaint

The lights went out on Wimbledon at Selhurst Park on Monday. Despite his disappointment at seeing the eventual postponement of the Dons' game against Arsenal, their chairman Sam Hamman perhaps wishes this was a more permanent state of affairs.

The issue of Wimbledon and their lack of a proper "home" ground is one which has ramifications beyond the sleeping London suburb of SW19, more famous for its fortnightly orgy of tennis every summer than for soccer.

Indeed, if stories which have been moving in and out of the public eye are to be believed, in the not-too-distant future, a side featuring the infrastructure and players which currently make up the Wimbledon club may be stepping out on a new home ground across the Irish Sea as the Dublin Dons.

Since their elevation to the old First Division in 1986, the only thing which has stood this small club apart from the big boys is their ground.

On the field, a blend of bargain buys, never-say-die tyros and colorful characters has kept the Dons afloat when many of their more well-heeled contemporaries have plummeted out of the top flight or flirted with relegation.

But off the field, or to be more precise, around it, they have had their problems. When they originally came up, they were based at Plough Lane, a ramshackle stadium in the London suburb of Wimbledon. The team's success has clearly outgrown their surroundings.

After three years based at the stadium, Hamman struck a controversial deal with Crystal Palace, owners of Selhurst Park, to ground share. The improvement in facilities and greater capacity cut little ice with the fans, who could not believe their precious team was moving, albeit the comparatively short distance around the south circular.

The Dons have taken to their surroundings and achieved fantastic results in the Premiership. But it has never been their home and attendance has been poor.

These two facts have forced Hamman to look at moving back to Wimbledon, which is actually in the London borough of Merton. The Lebanese millionaire has drawn up ambitious plans for a purpose-built stadium which would take the Dons back closer to their spiritual home.

But the councillors don't like it and the now the Dublin game has become about more than just the Dons' wish to relocate.

Many fans across the water in the Irish Republic would welcome Wimbledon with open arms. Not necessarily because they are looking forward to see-

ing the likes of Robbie Earle and Vinnie Jones ply their trade every week, although that would be a bonus for some.

No, the real attraction is that Wimbledon playing at home in Dublin would mean 19 "home" Premiership fixtures, bringing the likes of Manchester United, Liverpool and Everton across the water.

These giants have a massive fan base in Ireland and the ferries to England late on Friday night are normally packed with Irish fans desperate to see their Premiership heroes.

Not surprisingly, fans have responded positively to such a prospect, as has big business, which is just waiting for the commercial spin-offs which it would bring.

Perhaps more significantly, earlier this year, Hamman sold a substantial stake in the club to two Norwegian businessmen. Having shelled out millions, they are looking to develop the club and - hemmed in and unsupported at Selhurst Park and unwanted by Merton - they are looking around for alternatives.

Dublin would be ideal if it weren't in another country and therefore under the jurisdiction of another football association.

The traditional structure of feeder leagues supporting the national team would be blown apart by Wimbledon's presence in Dublin and, not surprisingly, the Irish FA have reacted negatively to the proposal, saying it is out of the question.

Europe's governing body, UEFA, would also keep a wary eye on the situation.

There have long been complaints from other countries that the British Isles is able to field the four home nations in soccer contests. A link-up with Dublin and the subsequent break-up of the carefully protected structure of national FAs might give those who wish to see a "Great Britain XI" further ammunition for their argument.

It could be that the proposed move to Dublin is a good one, which has come just a few years too early. With the prospect of a European League looming ever closer and clubs now buying into other European outfits to develop and blend players, the traditional power wielded by Football Associations is being gradually whittled down. How long before Glasgow Rangers, for instance, are competing regularly against Liverpool and Manchester United? Where is the argument against the Dublin Dons then?

Whatever happens, it is to be hoped for Hamman's sake that he finds a solution. The man has worked tirelessly to keep Wimbledon among the elite and it would be a tragedy if off the field matters undermined all his good work.

## LONDON CALLING

By Andy Cooper

# Ewingless NY picks up the slack

## Johnson, Houston lead Knicks to 79-67 win over Dallas

NEW YORK (AP) — Patrick Ewing's absence seemed inspirational. Don Nelson's return was inconsequential and Dallas was simply dreadful as the New York Knicks defeated the Mavericks 79-67 Monday night.

Playing their first game since Ewing's season-ending wrist injury, the Knicks came out with hustle, aggression and a surprisingly strong inside game. Larry Johnson had 18 points and eight rebounds, making six of his eight baskets from in close, and Allan Houston had a team-high 19 points.

Dallas lost its ninth straight and 21st in its last 23 games.

There was only a smattering of boos when Nelson, who was fired by the Knicks in March 1996, was introduced before the game as the Mavs coach.

Hornets 81, Raptors 79

Glen Rice made up for a sub-par performance with a tip-in at the buzzer that lifted Charlotte to a home win.

Rice, who came in as the NBA's fifth-leading scorer with a 22.4 average, missed 11 of his 17 field-goal attempts before tipping in a miss by Dell Curry.

Rice wound up with 18 points to complete Charlotte's comeback from a 12-point deficit and help the Hornets send the Raptors to their 11th loss in 12 road games. Damon Stoudamire had 21 points and five assists for Toronto.

**Nets 99, Magic 88**

Sam Cassell had 28 points, six assists and five steals to lead New Jersey to a road win.

Cassell and rookie Keith Van Horn sparked a decisive 13-0 run that started at the end of the third quarter.

Kendall Gill scored 18 points for New Jersey, while Van Horn finished with 16. Mark Price led the Magic with 23 points and seven assists.

**Pistons 96, 76ers 92**

Grant Hill had 22 points, 10 rebounds, eight assists and three blocks, and Detroit overcame a 21-point, second-half deficit to win on the road.

Jerry Stackhouse, traded from Philadelphia to Detroit last week, scored 17 points and made a key block against Tim Thomas with 6.4 seconds left. Joe Dumars then hit two free throws to clinch it for Detroit, which trailed 55-34 early in the third period and still was behind by 15 going into the final period.

**Brian Williams and Lindsey Hunter** also scored 17 points for Detroit, who snapped a four-game road losing streak and beat the 76ers for the second time in three nights. Derrick Coleman led Philadelphia with 23 points and eight rebounds.

**Jazz 101, Hawks 99**

Karl Malone scored 27 points, including a clinching jumper with 32.6 seconds remaining, and visiting Utah handed Atlanta its third straight loss.

Malone, leading the Jazz in scoring for the 25th consecutive game, had 11 points in the fourth quarter as Utah held off Atlanta. Christian Laettner led the



UNDERHANDED — Lakers' Kobe Bryant gets under the Rockets' Charles Barkley for two. Los Angeles won, 94-83

**Hawks with 20 points.**

**Wizards 110, Bucks 79**

Juwan Howard scored 25 points and Chris Webber added 23 as visiting Washington extended its season-high winning streak to five games.

**Lakers 94, Rockets 83**

Kobe Bryant scored 19 points and Eddie Jones had nine of his 17 points in an early third-quarter charge that helped Los Angeles win on the road.

The Lakers beat the Rockets for the third straight time this season.

Clyde Drexler led the Rockets with 17 points. Charles Barkley had 21 rebounds and 14 points

for Houston, which shot only 38.5 percent from the field.

A hairline fracture to Shaquille O'Neal's right wrist must be added to the strained abdominal muscle that has kept him out for the last five weeks.

O'Neal will miss at least two more weeks because of the wrist injury, which occurred about two weeks ago from punching a heavy bag.

**Suns 91, Warriors 76**

Cedric Ceballos scored 11 of his 17 points in the fourth quarter as Phoenix notched a home win.

Antonio McDyess also scored 17 points for the Suns, who won their third straight.

EASTERN CONFERENCE			
Atlantic Division			
Team	W	L	Pct.
Miami	17	8	.680
Orlando	16	11	.593
New York	16	11	.593
New Jersey	14	11	.560
Boston	12	12	.500
Washington	14	14	.500
Philadelphia	6	19	.240
Central Division			
Atlanta	19	8	.704
Indiana	17	8	.680
Chicago	16	9	.640
Cleveland	16	9	.640
Charlotte	16	9	.640
Detroit	13	15	.464
Milwaukee	12	14	.464
Toronto	3	24	.111

WESTERN CONFERENCE			
Midwest Division			
Team	W	L	Pct.
Utah	16	10	.615
San Antonio	15	9	.609
Minnesota	11	14	.440
Memphis	10	17	.370
Dallas	5	21	.192
Denver	2	22	.083
Pacific Division			
Seattle	21	5	.808
LA Lakers	21	6	.778
Phoenix	16	8	.667
Portland	14	10	.583
Sacramento	10	17	.370
Golden State	5	19	.264
LA Clippers	5	22	.185

# Wings top Bruins again

BOSTON (AP) — Anders Eriksson had a goal and an assist and Chris Osgood made 33 saves as the Detroit Red Wings beat the Boston Bruins for the ninth straight time with a 4-2 win on Monday night.

Joe Kocur, Darren McCarty and Nicklas Lidstrom also scored for the Red Wings, who last lost to the Bruins on December 31, 1991.

**Lightning 2, Blues 2**

Dino Ciccarilli scored his second goal of the game with 37.7 seconds left in regulation to give host Tampa Bay a tie.

The right wing redirected Roman Hamrik's blue line drive past goalie Grant Fuhr, helping Tampa Bay tie a franchise record with an eight-game home unbeaten streak. The Lightning are 4-0-4 during the streak.

Brett Hull gave the Blues a 2-1 lead in the second period. It was Hull's 344th career goal, tying former Montreal star Maurice Richard for 16th place on the career list. Pierre Turgeon also scored for the Blues.

Jamie Storr made 32 saves in his first NHL game of the season and Glen Murray scored a second-period goal as visiting Los Angeles extended its winning streak to three games.

Storr, 21, recalled from Long Beach of the International Hockey League on December 17, had his first shutout in 16 career games. Murray scored his 10th goal of the season with 2:33 left in the second period.

**Mighty Ducks 5, Flames 1**

Tecumseh Selanue scored twice to reach the 30-goal mark for the fourth time in his career as Anaheim won at home. Selanue, Kevin Todd and Jeff Nielsen scored in a 3:38 span of the second period to send the Mighty Ducks to their second victory in 10 games.

Dmitri Mironov also scored for Anaheim.

Cory Stillman scored for Calgary.

**First Period—1, St. Louis Turgeon 5 (Coulton, Yano), 15:56. Second Period—Tampa Bay, Ciccarilli 4 (Langhove, Wiemer), 23:3. St. Louis, Hull 1 (Turgeon), 30:04. Third Period—1, Tampa Bay, Kocur 1 (Murray), 18:23. Overtime—None. Goals—St. Louis, Fuhr; Tampa Bay, Schwab, Pappalardo, 13:51.**

Los Angeles 0 0 0-1  
Chicago 0 0 0-0

First Period—None. Second Period—1, Los Angeles, Murray 10 (Pereca, Zlotnik), 18:27. Third Period—None. Goals—Los Angeles, Storr, Chicago, Hackett, A.—18:05

Calgary 0 1 0-1  
Anheim 1 2 3-4

First Period—1, Anheim, Selanue 29 (Rucchin), 8:23. Second Period—2, Calgary, Stillman 13 (Moran, Abelson), 23:3. Anheim, Todd 4 (Young, Dalenau), 11:35 (pp.). Anaheim, Selanue 30 (Rucchin, Mironov), 13:14. Third Period—6, Anaheim, Mironov 5 (Knyaz), 15:57. Goals—Calgary, Selanue, Mironov, 13:14. Stillman, A.—16:37 (17:17).

EASTERN CONFERENCE						
Atlantic Division						
Team	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
New Jersey	23	10	7	47	106	67
Philadelphia	20	9	7	47	101	78
Washington	16	13	7	39	103	98
N.Y. Islanders	15	16	5	35	98	96
N.Y. Rangers	10	16	12	32	96	105
Florida	12	19	5	29	88	108
Tampa Bay	7	21	7	21	64	107
Northeast Division						
Pittsburgh	18	11	8	44	100	88
Montreal	19	14	5	43	110	93
Penn	16	15	6	38	93	96
Ottawa	16	17	4	34	92	87
Carolina	13	18	5	31	92	100
Buffalo	12	16	6	30	83	93
WESTERN CONFERENCE						
Central Division						
Dallas	24	9	4	52	118	73
Detroit	21	9	7	49	122	77
St. Louis	21	12	5	47	111	88
Phoenix	14	16	6	34	97	102
Toronto	12	17	5	29	78	93
Chicago	11	18	7	29	77	87
Pacific Division						
Calgary	18	8	11	47	110	93
Los Angeles	15	14	6	36	102	97
San Jose	14	16	4	32	91	100
Atlanta	13	18	6	32	87	112
Edmonton	11	17	9	31	86	106
Vancouver	11	20	5	27	103	122
Calgary	10	21	7	24	94	116

**Oilers 3, Canadiens 3**

Ryan Smyth scored with 10 seconds left in regulation to give visiting Edmonton a tie.

With Oilers goalie Bob Essensa off for an extra attacker, Smyth came from behind the net to stuff Jason Amott's rebound past goalie Jocelyn Thibault.

**Senators 4, Islanders 1**

Andreas Dackell had a goal and an assist as Ottawa continued its road mastery of New York.

Ron Tugnait had 14 saves to help the Senators improve to 4-0-1 in their last five visits to Nassau Coliseum. Sergei Zholtok, Lance Pitlick and Alexei Yashin also scored for Ottawa.

**Kings 1, Blackhawks 0**

**First Period—1, Detroit, Kocur 4 (Eriksson), 13:03. Second Period—2, Detroit, McCarty 9 (Larsson, Lidstrom), 2:56 (pp.). 3, Boston, Kovalchuk 13 (Eliot, Alton), 5:22 (pp.). 4, Detroit, Eriksson 3 (Murphy, Yegorov), 15:08. Third Period—None. Goals—Detroit, Kocur 4 (Eriksson), 13:03. Boston, Kovalchuk 13 (Eliot, Alton), 5:22 (pp.). 4, Detroit, Eriksson 3 (Murphy, Yegorov), 15:08. Overtime—None. Goals—Detroit, Osgood, Boston, Osgood, 15:16, 15:21.**

Montreal 2 1 0-3  
First Period—1, Montreal, Savigne 9 (Recht, Kovalchuk), 4:33. 2, Montreal, Damphousse 10 (Blais, Gauthier), 6:21. 3, Edmonton, Weight 10 (Blais, Gauthier), 10:01 (pp.). Second Period—4, Edmonton, Weight 11, 1:23. 5, Montreal, Thornton 2 (Blais, Gauthier), 7:11. Third Period—6, Edmonton, Simon 12 (Blais, Gauthier), 19:50. Overtime—None. Goals—Edmonton, Essensa, Mironov, Thibault, A.—20:51

Ottawa 2 1 1-4  
N.Y. Islanders 0 1 0-1  
First Period—1, Ottawa, Dackell 5 (McCachem, 3:35 (pp.). 2, Ottawa, Zholtok 4 (Dackell, Kravchuk), 15:27 (pp.). Second Period—3, Ottawa, Pitlick 7 (Lambert, Sorel), 1:45. 4, New York, Pally 18 (McCabe, Bernuzzi), 18:43. Third Period—1, Ottawa, Yashin 14 (Dackell, McCachem), 5:43. Goals—Ottawa, Thibault, New York, Sola, A.—10:27

St. Louis 1 1 0 0-2  
Tampa Bay 0 1 1 0-2

**ORLANDO (88)** Outlaw 4-7 0-0 6, Grant 7-14 4-18, Sealey 5-11 5-18, Wilkes 4-8 0-0 8, Price 8-15 3-32, Armstrong 1-3 0-0 3, Evans 0-0 1-1 1, Harper 3-8 0-0 6, Thomas 1-1 1-2 3, Stewart 4-7 2-12, Taylor 0-0 0-0 0, Totals 34-71 15-38.

**FOULLED OUT—None. Rebounds—New Jersey 53 (Killey 11, Orlando 42 (Grant 11), Assists—New Jersey 18 (Cassell 6, Orlando 23 (Gill), Price 7). Total fouls—New Jersey 23, Orlando 25. Technical—Coach Collier, Cassell, A.—15:58.**

**TORONTO (79)** Carty 4-11 5-5 13, Williams 5-10 0-0 7, Miller 1-5 2-4, Christie 3-6 4-4 10, Stoudamire 8-18 4-21, Tabor 2-8 1-15, Wallace 4-8 8-13, McGrady 3-7 0-8 6, Seay 1-1 0-0 2, Reid 0-2 2-2, Long 3-2 3-8, Totals 39-75 25-52.

**CHARLOTTE (81)** Mason 6-12 5-17 15, Rice 7-12 1-2, Dwyer 7-2-2, Wesley 4-7 2-21, Pate 4-11 0-0 8, Williams 1-1 0-0 0, Reid 2-0-0 4, Curry 3-8 0-0 4, Armstrong 1-2 2-4, Galloway 3-5 5-11, Beck 0-0 0-0 0, Totals 30-74 17-28.

**FOULLED OUT—None. Rebounds—Toronto 49 (Hancock 10, Milwaukee 42 (Hill 11), Assists—Washington 28 (Stankovic 10), Milwaukee 14 (Allen 4). Total fouls—Washington 22, Milwaukee 25. Technical—Webster, A.—4:42.**

**LA LAKERS (94)** For 8-16 0-16, Perry 5-10 1-12, Campbell 5-11 8-11, Jones 7-12 1-17, Van Ees 5-16 0-10, Bryant 6-13 5-6 16, Stewart 3-1 0-2 5, Fisher 0-0 0-0 0, Rucker 0-0 0-0 0, Totals 37-78 14-20-34.

**HOUSTON (83)** She 2-5 2-7, Barclay 5-13 4-14, Williams 5-13 2-12, Dwyer 4-7 4-9 17, Meloney 1-8 0-0 8, Ballard 6-11 0-1 15, Davis 0-1 0-0 0, Price 5-7 0-15, Johnson 0-2 0-0 0, Harrington 2-2 0-4, Totals 30-78 16-19 88.

**FOULLED OUT—None. Rebounds—Los Angeles 45 (Campbell 14), Houston 33 (Barney 21). Assists—Los Angeles 18 (Van Ees 10), Houston 18 (Dwyer 9). Total fouls—Los Angeles 18,**

**PHILADELPHIA (82)** Thomas 7-15 4-5 18, Coleman 6-14 10-12 23, Westphalen 1-2 5-7 7, Jackson 1-3 3-3 20, Iverson 2-17 7-7 17, 1-2 5-7, Dave 2-6 0-3 4, Cummings 0-0 2-2 2, Mize 2-4 0-4, Totals 28-75 32-42 52.

**FOULLED OUT—None. Rebounds—Dallas 41 (Green 9), New York 51 (Giles 10), Assists—Dallas 13 (Pace 5), New York 17 (Ward 5), Totals 10, New York 12. Technical—Finley, A.—13:53.**

**DETROIT (96)** Hill 5-11 11-14 22, B. Williams 7-13 3-3 17, Monroe 6-8 0-3 0, Dumars 3-8 4-5 11, Hunter 5-11 2-4 17, Stachura 3-10 1-11 17, J. Williams 0-1 0-0 0, Seay 1-1 0-0 2, Reid 0-2 2-2, Long 3-2 3-8, Totals 29-62 34-44 56.

**PHILADELPHIA (82)** Thomas 7-15 4-5 18, Coleman 6-14 10-12 23, Westphalen 1-2 5-7 7, Jackson 1-3 3-3 20, Iverson 2-17 7-7 17, 1-2 5-7, Dave 2-6 0-3 4, Cummings 0-0 2-2 2, Mize 2-4 0-4, Totals 28-75 32-42 52.

**FOULLED OUT—None. Rebounds—Toronto 49 (Hancock 10, Milwaukee 42 (Hill 11), Assists—Washington 28 (Stankovic 10), Milwaukee 14 (Allen 4). Total fouls—Washington 22, Milwaukee 25. Technical—Webster, A.—4:42.**

**LA LAKERS (94)** For 8-16 0-16, Perry 5-10 1-12, Campbell 5-11 8-11, Jones 7-12 1-17, Van Ees 5-16 0-10, Bryant 6-13 5-6 16, Stewart 3-1 0-2 5, Fisher 0-0 0-0 0, Rucker 0-0 0-0 0, Totals 37-78 14-20-34.

**HOUSTON (83)** She 2-5 2-7, Barclay 5-13 4-14, Williams 5-13 2-12, Dwyer 4-7 4-9 17, Meloney 1-8 0-0 8, Ballard 6-11 0-1 15, Davis 0-1 0-0 0, Price 5-7 0-15, Johnson 0-2 0-0 0, Harrington 2-2 0-4, Totals 30-78 16-19 88.

**FOULLED OUT—None. Rebounds—Los Angeles 45 (Campbell 14), Houston 33 (Barney 21). Assists—Los Angeles 18 (Van Ees 10), Houston 18 (Dwyer 9). Total fouls—Los Angeles 18,**

**ORLANDO (88)** Outlaw 4-7 0-0 6, Grant 7-14 4-18, Sealey 5-11 5-18, Wilkes 4-8 0-0 8, Price 8-15 3-32, Armstrong 1-3 0-0 3, Evans 0-0 1-1 1, Harper 3-8 0-0 6, Thomas 1-1 1-2 3, Stewart 4-7 2-12, Taylor 0-0 0-0 0, Totals 34-71 15-38.

**FOULLED OUT—None. Rebounds—New Jersey 53 (Killey 11, Orlando 42 (Grant 11), Assists—New Jersey 18 (Cassell 6, Orlando 23 (Gill), Price 7). Total fouls—New Jersey 23, Orlando 25. Technical—Coach Collier, Cassell, A.—15:58.**

**TORONTO (79)** Carty 4-11 5-5 13, Williams 5-10 0-0 7, Miller 1-5 2-4, Christie 3-6 4-4 10, Stoudamire 8-18 4-21, Tabor 2-8 1-15, Wallace 4-8 8-13, McGrady 3-7 0-8 6, Seay 1-1 0-0 2, Reid 0-2 2-2, Long 3-2 3-8, Totals 39-75 25-52.

**CHARLOTTE (81)** Mason 6-12 5-17 15, Rice 7-12 1-2, Dwyer 7-2-2, Wesley 4-7 2-21, Pate 4-11 0-0 8, Williams 1-1 0-0 0, Reid 2-0-0 4, Curry 3-8 0-0 4, Armstrong 1-2 2-4, Galloway 3-5 5-11, Beck 0-0 0-0 0, Totals 30-74 17-28.

**FOULLED OUT—None. Rebounds—Toronto 49 (Hancock 10, Milwaukee 42 (Hill 11), Assists—Washington 28 (Stankovic 10), Milwaukee 14 (Allen 4). Total fouls—Washington 22, Milwaukee 25. Technical—Webster, A.—4:42.**

**LA LAKERS (94)** For 8-16 0-16, Perry 5-10 1-12, Campbell 5-11 8-11, Jones 7-12 1-17, Van Ees 5-16 0-10, Bryant 6-13 5-6 16, Stewart 3-1 0-2 5, Fisher 0-0 0-0 0, Rucker 0-0 0-0 0, Totals 37-78 14-20-34.

**HOUSTON (83)** She 2-5 2-7, Barclay 5-13 4-14, Williams 5-13 2-12, Dwyer 4-7 4-9 17, Meloney 1-8 0-0 8, Ballard 6-11 0-1 15, Davis 0-1 0-0 0, Price 5-7 0-15, Johnson 0-2 0-0 0, Harrington 2-2 0-4, Totals 30-78 16-19 88.

**FOULLED OUT—None. Rebounds—Los Angeles 45 (Campbell 14), Houston 33 (Barney 21). Assists—Los Angeles 18 (Van Ees 10), Houston 18 (Dwyer 9). Total fouls—Los Angeles 18,**

**PHILADELPHIA (82)** Thomas 7-15 4-5 18, Coleman 6-14 10-12 23, Westphalen 1-2 5-7 7, Jackson 1-3 3-3 20, Iverson 2-17 7-7 17, 1-2 5-7, Dave 2-6 0-3 4, Cummings 0-0 2-2 2, Mize 2-4 0-4, Totals 28-75 32-42 52.

**FOULLED OUT—None. Rebounds—Dallas 41 (Green 9), New York 51 (Giles 10), Assists—Dallas 13 (Pace 5), New York 17 (Ward 5), Totals 10, New York 12. Technical—Finley, A.—13:53.**

**DETROIT (96)** Hill 5-11 11-14 22, B. Williams 7-13 3-3 17, Monroe 6-8 0-3 0, Dumars 3-8 4-5 11, Hunter 5-11 2-4 17, Stachura 3-10 1-11 17, J. Williams 0-1 0-0 0, Seay 1-1 0-0 2, Reid 0-2 2-2, Long 3-2 3-8, Totals 29-62 34-44 56.

**PHILADELPHIA (82)** Thomas 7-15 4-5 18, Coleman 6-14 10-12 23, Westphalen 1-2 5-7 7, Jackson 1-3 3-3 20, Iverson 2-17 7-7 17, 1-2 5-7, Dave 2-6 0-3 4, Cummings 0-0 2-2 2, Mize 2-4 0-4, Totals 28-75 32-42 52.

**FOULLED OUT—None. Rebounds—Toronto 49 (Hancock 10, Milwaukee 42 (Hill 11), Assists—Washington 28 (Stankovic 10), Milwaukee 14 (Allen 4). Total fouls—Washington 22, Milwaukee 25. Technical—Webster, A.—4:42.**

**LA LAKERS (94)** For 8-16 0-16, Perry 5-10 1-12, Campbell 5-11 8-11, Jones 7-12 1-17, Van Ees 5-16 0-10, Bryant 6-13 5-6 16, Stewart 3-1 0-2 5, Fisher 0-0 0-0 0, Rucker 0-0 0-0 0, Totals 37-78 14-20-34.

**HOUSTON (83)** She 2-5 2-7, Barclay 5-13 4-14, Williams 5-13 2-12, Dwyer 4-7 4-9 17, Meloney 1-8 0-0 8, Ballard 6-11 0-1 15, Davis 0-1 0-0 0, Price 5-7 0-15, Johnson 0-2 0-0 0, Harrington 2-2 0-4, Totals 30-78 16-19 88.

**FOULLED OUT—None. Rebounds—Los Angeles 45 (Campbell 14), Houston 33 (Barney 21). Assists—Los Angeles 18 (Van Ees 10), Houston 18 (Dwyer 9). Total fouls—Los Angeles 18,**

**PHILADELPHIA (82)** Thomas 7-15 4-5 18, Coleman 6-14 10-12 23, Westphalen 1-2 5-7 7, Jackson 1-3 3-3 20, Iverson 2-17 7-7 17, 1-2 5-7, Dave 2-6 0-3 4, Cummings 0-0 2-2 2, Mize 2-4 0-4, Totals 28-75 32-42 52.

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**DETROIT (96)** Hill 5-11 11-14 22, B. Williams 7-13 3-3 17, Monroe 6-8 0-3 0, Dumars 3-8 4-5 11, Hunter 5-11 2-4 17, Stachura 3-10 1-11 17, J. Williams 0-1 0-0 0, Seay 1-1 0-0 2, Reid 0-2 2-2, Long 3-2 3-8, Totals 29-62 34-44 56.

**PH**



### Inside

#### Wimbledon need a real home

Page 18

#### Australian year in review

Page 17

Sports Editors  
Joe Hoffman & Ori Lewis

#### Brazil top '97 soccer rankings

ZURICH (AP) — Fresh from their triumph at the Confederations Cup, Brazil finished off 1997 atop FIFA's World Rankings for the fourth straight year. They stayed comfortably ahead of Germany, who remained in second. The Czech Republic, held to a draw by South Africa and beaten by Uruguay at the Confederations Cup, moved up a notch to third after finishing with the bronze in Riyadh. England, who have played only once since qualifying for the World Cup — a 2-0 win over Cameroon in November, moved up two places to fourth. Similarly, Mexico, who fired coach Bora Milutinovic after he guided the team to the World Cup, moved up six places to fifth.

## Pats edge Dolphins for homefield advantage

MIAMI (AP) — A holding penalty on a two-point conversion cost Jimmy Johnson a chance to beat the New England Patriots at home.

He won't get another one. New England overcame a slow start and a late Miami comeback Monday night to beat the Dolphins 14-12. The game gave the Patriots the American Conference East championship and home-field advantage when the teams meet again in the first round of the playoffs Sunday.

"Fortunately it's not over with," Johnson said.

"Fortunately we get another shot." Miami closed within two points on Dan Marino's 8-yard touchdown pass to Lamar Thomas with 3:46 left. But Karim Abdul-Jabbar's two-point conversion run was negated by a holding penalty on seven-time Pro Bowl tackle Richmond Webb, and on the second conversion attempt, Marino's pass fell incomplete.

The defending AFC champion Patriots (10-6) must now try to beat Miami (9-7) twice in one week, but the Dolphins face an even stiffer challenge. They've lost seven consecutive postseason road games since winning the Super Bowl in January 1974.

The Dolphins were beaten at New England 27-24 on November 23.

On Monday, the Patriots managed just two first downs in the first half and fell behind 6-0 on two Olindo Mare field goals.

But in the second half, they mounted touchdown drives of 70 and 55 yards and forced the Dolphins into repeated negative-

yardage plays with frequent blitzing.

A hurried Marino completed 28 of 44 passes for 278 yards but was sacked four times.

"They blitzed us and blitzed us, and half the time we didn't make the adjustments," Marino said. "There were some I missed."

It created a problem, and it's something we're going to have to work on," Marino connected on four third-down passes in a 76-yard drive that culminated with Thomas' score. On the two-point

try, Webb was called for holding Willie McGinest.

"The official called one of the eight or nine penalties he called against us," Johnson said. "I think they had one penalty. So we didn't make it."

Johnson was also unhappy that an apparent Miami TD on a fumble recovery in the first half was negated when the officials ruled the play had been blown dead before Jerry Wilson's 36-yard return.

"When the referee tells me he screwed up and he had an inadvertent whistle and it should have been a touchdown, that doesn't make me happy," Johnson said. "Instead of being 13-0 at halftime, we were only up 6-0."

The Patriots — criticized a week ago for a late third-down interception that cost them a lead against Pittsburgh — missed a chance to run out the clock in the final minutes when they decided to throw on third-and-1. Drew Bledsoe's pass fell incomplete.

Tom Tupa then shanked a punt 18 yards, and Miami started at the New England 47 with 1:58 left. But Lawyer Milloy intercepted Marino's desperation pass on fourth-and-15 at the Miami 48.

The Patriots had just 77 yards before driving 70 yards on their first possession of the second half to take a 7-6 lead.

Dave Meggett's 20-yard reception on third down set up Marrio Grier's 2-yard touchdown run, his first of the season.

Meggett's 5-yard score made it 14-6 with 12:07 to go.

Mare kicked a 50-yard FG, his longest this season, and then a 41-yarder to give Miami an early lead.

#### NFL playoff matchups

##### Wild Cards

Saturday  
Minnesota at NY Giants 7:30 p.m. (Israel time)

Sunday  
Jacksonville at Denver, 11 p.m.

Sunday  
Miami at New England, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday  
Detroit at Tampa Bay, 11 p.m.

##### Divisional Playoffs

Saturday, Jan. 3

Denver, Jacksonville, or New England at Pittsburgh, 7:30 p.m.

Detroit, Minnesota or Tampa Bay at San Francisco, 11 p.m.

Sunday, Jan. 4

Detroit, NY Giants or Tampa Bay at Green Bay, 7:30 p.m.

Denver, Jacksonville, or Miami at Kansas City, 11 p.m.

##### Conference Championships

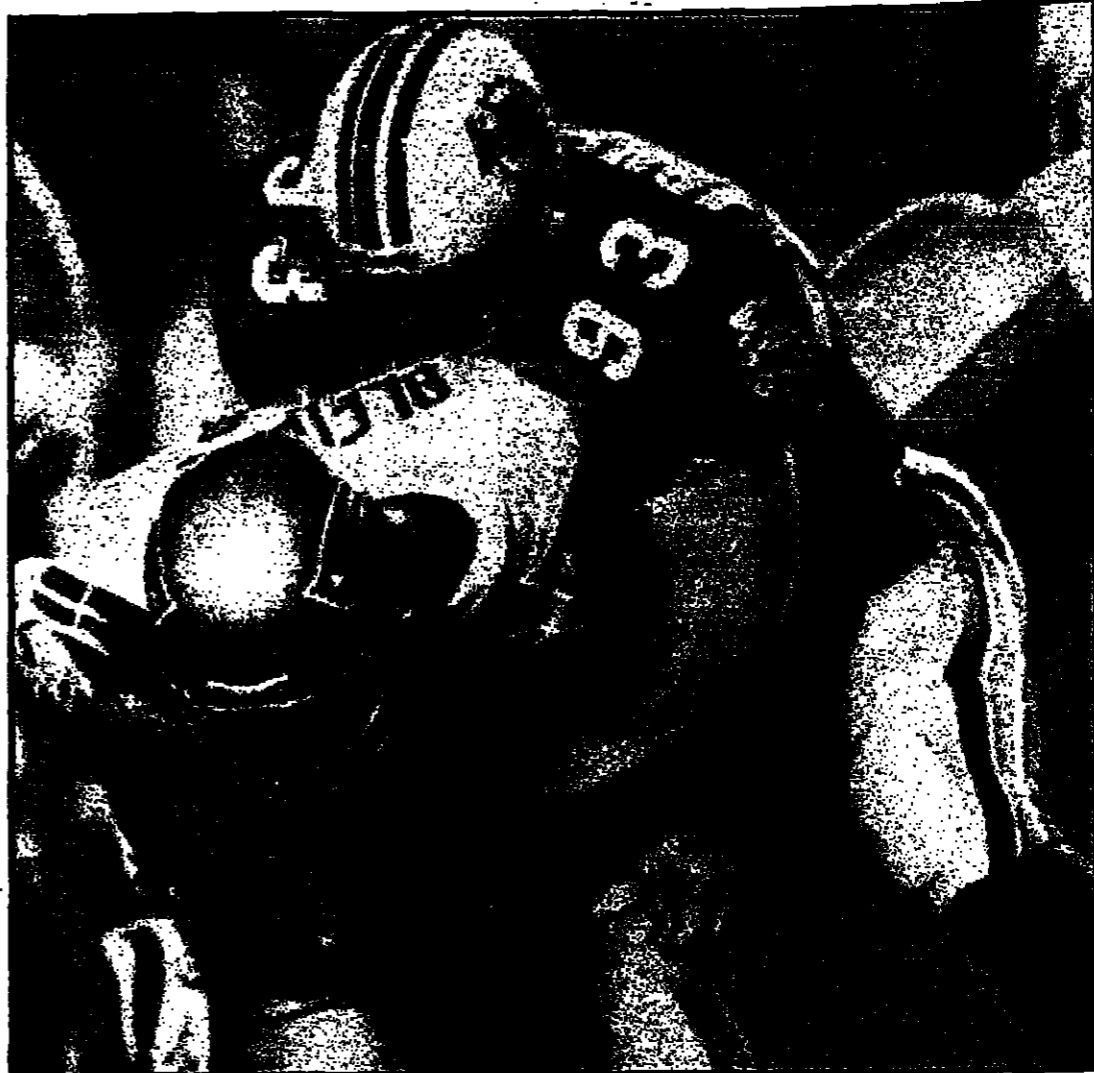
Sunday, Jan. 11

##### Super Bowl

Sunday, Jan. 25 (San Diego)

##### Pro Bowl

Sunday, Feb. 1 (Houston)



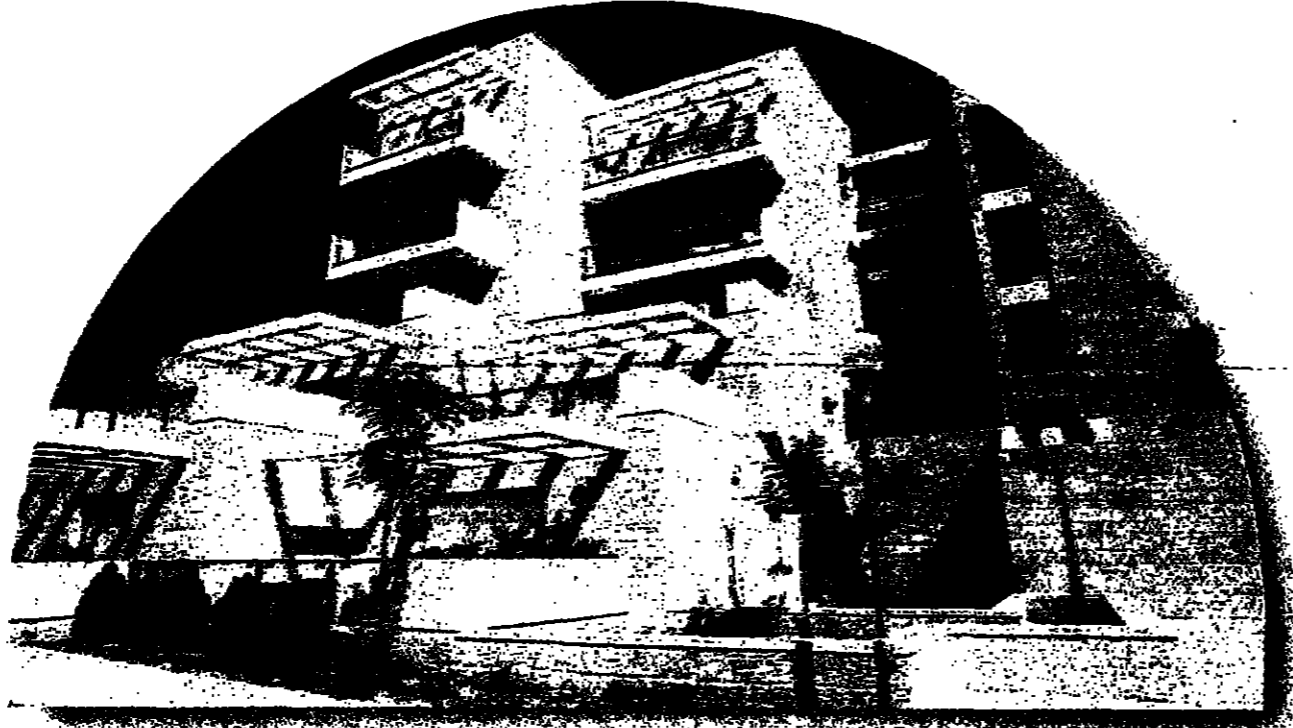
**DOWNSIZING** — Patriots QB Drew Bledsoe gets sacked for a five-yard loss by Miami DE Terrence Armstrong in second-quarter action. (Reuters)

New England 0 0 7 7-14  
Miami 9 9 0 0-0  
First Quarter: Min—FG Mare 50, BSA, Second Quarter: Min—FG Mare 41, 1:18, Third Quarter: NE—Grier 2 run (Vinnyel kick), 7:58, Fourth Quarter: NE—Meggett 5 run (Vinnyel kick), 12:07, Min—Thomas 8 pass from Marino (pass block), 2:48, 14-7, 14:57.  
RECEIVING—New England, Culter 10-20, Meggett 3-9, Bledsoe 3-7, Grier 1-2, Miami, Abdul-Jabbar 19-33, Phillips 5-8, McPhee 1-3.  
PASSING—New England, Bledsoe 18-26-173, Marino 28-44-127.  
RECEIVING—New England, Jefferson 7-76, Culter 4-28, Meggett 3-28, Byers 2-25, Briscoe 1-9, Culter 1-8, McPhee 1-8, Abdul-Jabbar 6-50, McPhee 4-51, McPhee 2-15, Pritchett 2-22, Pritchett 2-25, Potts 2-14, Pritchett 2-11, Droyan 1-4.  
RUSHING—Miami, Mare 51 (WR).

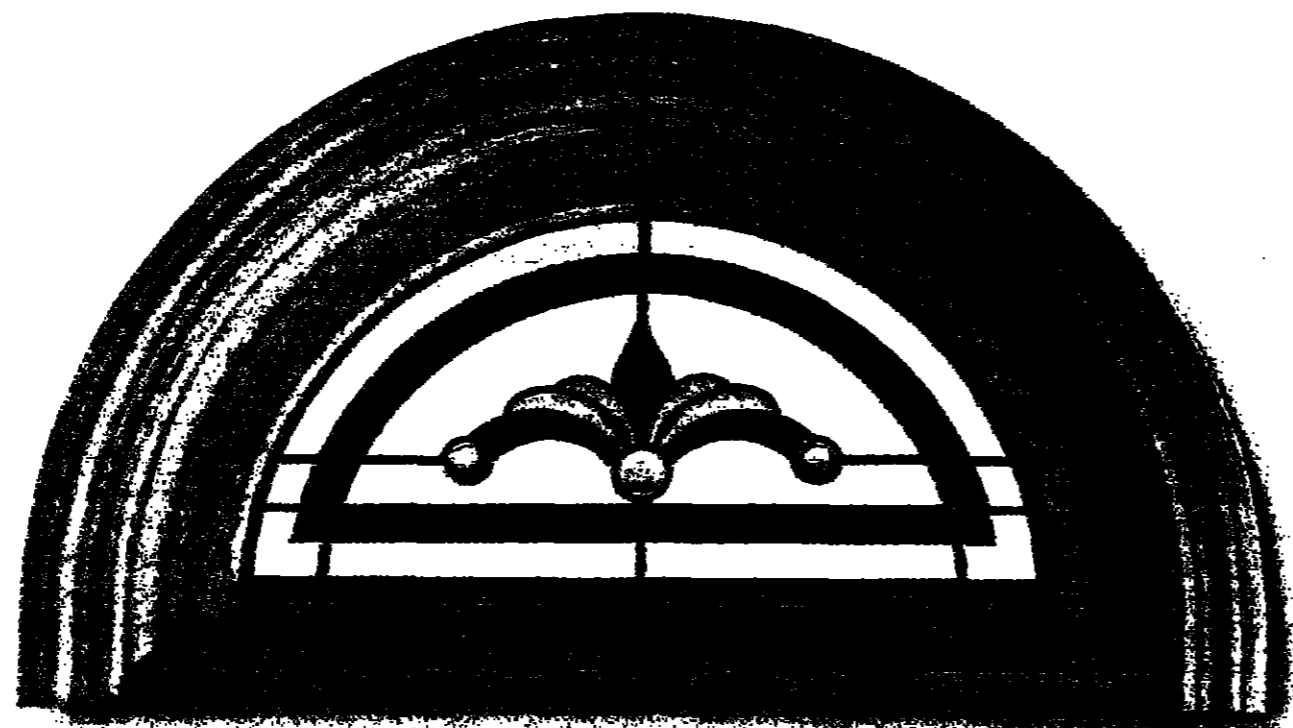
#### NFL Final Standings

AMERICAN CONFERENCE						NATIONAL CONFERENCE							
East	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA	East	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA
x-New England	10	6	0	.625	369	289	x-NY Giants	10	5	1	.656	307	265
y-Miami	9	7	0	.563	339	327	Washington	8	7	1	.531	327	289
NY Jets	9	7	0	.563	348	287	Philadelphia	6	9	1	.406	317	372
Buffalo	6	10	0	.375	255	347	Indianapolis	6	10	0	.375	304	314
Indianapolis	3	13	0	.188	213	401	Arizona	4	12	0	.250	283	379
Central						Central							
x-Pittsburgh	11	5	0	.688	372	307	x-Green Bay	13	3	0	.813	422	282
y-Jacksonville	11	5	0	.688	394	318	y-Tampa Bay	10	6	0	.625	299	263
Kansas	8	8	0	.500	333	310	y-Jetrol	9	7	0	.563	379	306
Cincinnati	7	9	0	.438	355	405	y-Minnesota	9	7	0	.563	354	359
Baltimore	6	9	1	.404	326	345	Chicago	4	12	0	.250	263	421
West						West							
x-Kansas City	13	3	0	.813	375	232	x-San Francisco	13	3	0	.813	375	265
y-Denver	12	4	0	.750	472	287	Carolina	7	9	0	.438	265	314
Seattle	8	8	0	.500	265	342	Atlanta	7	9	0	.438	320	341
Oakland	4	12	0	.250	324	419	New Orleans	6	10	0	.375	237	327
San Diego	4	12	0	.250	244	425	St. Louis	5	11	0	.313	299	359

x-was division title y-claimed playoff berth



# THE LOCATION AND THE PRESTIGE



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## Betar Jerusalem win Toto Cup

By ORI LEWIS

Defending league champions, Betar Jerusalem, made their intentions for this season very clear yesterday when they beat Maccabi Tel Aviv 3-1 in extra time to clinch the Toto Cup and with it a cash prize of NIS160,000.

After a lackluster first half, Betar picked up the pace in the second period and got on the scoresheet in the 53rd minute when Nir Sivilia, was put clean through the Maccabi defense. He slotted the ball from 10 meters past a helpless Alexander Obarov in the Maccabi's veteran captain, Nir Klingler, a former captain of the national side, was sent off for dissent.

Maccabi might have leveled the scores but for a poorly taken penalty by Avi Nimni in the 80th minute. Betar keeper Itzik Kornfein deflected the ball with ease from Nimni's weak shot.

Maccabi forced extra time in the dying moments when another veteran, substitute Eli Driks, headed

the ball into an empty net. The extra 30 minutes was all Betar's as 10-man Maccabi failed to keep up the pace. The Jerusalem club's star goalscorer, Hungarian Istvan Pishont, chested the ball home in the 96th minute to regain the lead for his side. He sealed the result by slotting the ball home seven minutes later.

Both clubs ferried spectators from the unemployment-stricken town of Ofakim to the game and have pledged to donate the gate takings to aid the townspeople. Maccabi's runners'-up cheque was worth NIS65,000.

The annual event, sponsored by the Israel Sports Betting Board, is the country's second cup competition after the knockout State Cup. It is played in a four-group round-robin format by the 16 National League sides, until the semi-final knockout stage.

The Second Division Toto Cup Betar Tel Aviv crushed Ness Ziona 7-2, Maccabi Jaffa beat Zafirim Holon 2-1, and in the Ramat Gan derby, Hapoel beat Hakoah 2-1.

## Arsenal hit by Adams' injury, match abandonment

LONDON (Reuters) — Tony Adams, Arsenal's captain and lynch-pin of England's defence, will be out of action for several weeks with a back injury that caused him to miss Arsenal's abandoned game against Wimbledon.

Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger said yesterday that Adams would not be able to train for at least two weeks "and then we'll see."

Newspapers said he could be out of action until the end of January.

The injury is the third this season for the 31-year-old central defender, who has played only 14 of Arsenal's 22 games and missed England's triumph in the summer's Tournoi de France with an ankle injury.

Adams is England's most experienced defender but his international place is under great pressure from

Sol Campbell and Gareth Southgate who played in tandem in a friendly last month against Cameroon.

England's next game is a friendly against Chile on February 11 which Adams is almost certain now to miss.

Wenger was frustrated by the abandonment of Monday's match against Wimbledon because of floodlight failure which left Arsenal 13 points behind leaders Manchester United.

"It is very difficult at the moment to match their pace," Wenger admitted. He called on the Football Association to demand clubs have a generator on stand-by at every stadium.

Monday's match was the third premier fixture called off this season because of floodlight failure.